

**CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN BANGLADESH (1971-2012):  
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

**Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University**

**in fulfilment of the requirements**

**for the award of the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled “Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh (1971-2012): Continuity and Change” submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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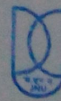
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## **DEDICATION**

### **To my *Mother***

*The hope in a clear morning sky azure blue,  
The power in prayers uttered soft and sincere,  
The faith in a promise and joy in a tear and  
Who offers heart to me as an eternal resting spot,  
Who loved me before seeing me, Who loves me in all my mistakes and  
will love me for what I am.*

### **To my *Father***

*I am everything reflected in your eyes, I am everything approved  
by your smile, I am everything born of your guidance,  
I am me only because of you and you skilled me in learning the glorious  
and adventurous primary lessons of catching fishes from the violent waves of  
Arabian Sea where death is an uninvited guest.*

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research and thousand reasons to embrace all aspects of life.  
Who taught me the real meaning of hard-work, patience and determination.*

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love you deeply, without problems or pride,  
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so intimate that when I fall asleep your eyes close.*

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ABASH</b>	<b>Ashrayon Implementation Organization</b>
<b>ACCA</b>	<b>Anti-Corruption Commission Act</b>
<b>ADAB</b>	<b>Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh</b>
<b>ADSC</b>	<b>Appellate Division of Supreme Court</b>
<b>AFD</b>	<b>Armed Forces Division</b>
<b>AL</b>	<b>Awami League</b>
<b>APAML</b>	<b>All Pakistan Awami Muslim League</b>
<b>APML</b>	<b>All Pakistan Muslim League</b>
<b>ASA</b>	<b>Association for Social Advancement</b>
<b>ATO</b>	<b>Anti-Terrorism Ordinance</b>
<b>ATT</b>	<b>Arms Trade Treaty</b>
<b>AWT</b>	<b>Army Welfare Trust</b>
<b>BA</b>	<b>Bangladesh Army</b>
<b>BAKSAL</b>	<b>Bangladesh Krishok Sromik Aoami Lig</b>
<b>BBC</b>	<b>British Broadcasting Company</b>
<b>BDR</b>	<b>Bangladesh Border Rifles</b>
<b>BGB</b>	<b>Biplobi Gono Bahini</b>
<b>BIDS</b>	<b>Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies</b>
<b>BIF</b>	<b>Brahmanbaria Islamic Foundation</b>

<b>BIIS</b>	<b>Bangladesh Institute of International &amp; Strategic Studies</b>
<b>BMS</b>	<b>Baptist Missionary Society</b>
<b>BNP</b>	<b>Bangladeshi Nationalist Party</b>
<b>BRAC</b>	<b>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee</b>
<b>BRAD</b>	<b>Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development</b>
<b>BSCBA</b>	<b>Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Associations</b>
<b>CA</b>	<b>Chief Adviser</b>
<b>CA</b>	<b>Constituent Assembly</b>
<b>CARE</b>	<b>Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere</b>
<b>CARITAS</b>	<b>Christian Organization for Relief and Rehabilitation</b>
<b>CCDB</b>	<b>The Christian Commission for Development</b>
<b>CE</b>	<b>Committee on Estimates</b>
<b>CE</b>	<b>Court of Enquiry</b>
<b>CEC</b>	<b>Chief Election Commission</b>
<b>CHT</b>	<b>Chittangong Hill Tracts</b>
<b>CIA</b>	<b>Central Intelligence Agency</b>
<b>CMH</b>	<b>Christian Mission Hospital</b>
<b>CMLA</b>	<b>Chief Martial Law Administrator</b>
<b>CMR</b>	<b>Civil Military Relations</b>
<b>COAS</b>	<b>Chief of Army Staff</b>
<b>CSOs</b>	<b>Civil Society Organizations</b>



<b>CTG</b>	<b>Caretaker Government</b>
<b>CU</b>	<b>Chittagong University</b>
<b>CUSO</b>	<b>Canadian University Service Overseas</b>
<b>DCB</b>	<b>District Council Bill</b>
<b>DCC</b>	<b>Defence Committee of the Cabinet</b>
<b>DCMLA</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator</b>
<b>DGFI</b>	<b>Directorate General of Forces' Intelligence</b>
<b>DSW</b>	<b>Department of Social Welfare</b>
<b>DU</b>	<b>Dhaka University</b>
<b>EBCP-ML</b>	<b>East Bengal Communist Party-Marxist Leninist</b>
<b>EBR</b>	<b>East Bengal Regiment</b>
<b>EPR</b>	<b>East Pakistan Rifles</b>
<b>FDI</b>	<b>Foreign Development Investment</b>
<b>FIU</b>	<b>Financial Intelligence Unit</b>
<b>GB</b>	<b>Grameen Bank</b>
<b>GDP</b>	<b>Gross Domestic Product</b>
<b>GOB</b>	<b>Government of Bangladesh</b>
<b>GOC</b>	<b>General Officer Commanding</b>
<b>GOI</b>	<b>Government of India</b>
<b>HUJI-B</b>	<b>Harkat-ul-Jihad-al- Islami</b>
<b>ICNL</b>	<b>International Centre for Non Profit Law</b>

<b>ICT</b>	<b>International Criminal Tribunal</b>
<b>IFB</b>	<b>Islamic Front of Bangladesh</b>
<b>ISI</b>	<b>Inter-Services Intelligence</b>
<b>JAGADAL</b>	<b>Jatiyatabadi Dal and Jatiyaganatantrik Dal</b>
<b>JCOs</b>	<b>Junior Commissioned Officers</b>
<b>JI</b>	<b>Jaaat-e-Islami</b>
<b>JIB</b>	<b>Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh</b>
<b>JMB</b>	<b>Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh</b>
<b>JMJB</b>	<b>Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh</b>
<b>JP</b>	<b>Jatiyo Party</b>
<b>JRB</b>	<b>Jatiya Rakhi Bahini</b>
<b>JS</b>	<b>Jatiya Sagsad</b>
<b>JSD</b>	<b>Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal</b>
<b>MB</b>	<b>Mukti Bahini</b>
<b>MLA</b>	<b>Marxist Leninist Analysis</b>
<b>MLPA</b>	<b>Money Laundering Prevention Act</b>
<b>MNCs</b>	<b>Multi-National Corporations</b>
<b>MoD</b>	<b>Ministry of Defense</b>
<b>MP</b>	<b>Member of Parliament</b>
<b>NCCCC</b>	<b>National Coordination Committee against Crime &amp; Corruption</b>
<b>NCOs</b>	<b>Naval Chief Officers</b>

<b>NDA</b>	<b>National Defense Academy</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non-Governmental Organizations</b>
<b>NM</b>	<b>Nachol Movement</b>
<b>NSC</b>	<b>National Security Council</b>
<b>PAC</b>	<b>Public Accounts Committee</b>
<b>PBCP</b>	<b>Purba Bangla Communist Party</b>
<b>PMO</b>	<b>Prime Minister's Office</b>
<b>PPP</b>	<b>Pakistan's Peoples Party</b>
<b>PUC</b>	<b>Public Undertaking Committee</b>
<b>RAB</b>	<b>Rapid Action Battalion</b>
<b>RAW</b>	<b>Research and Analysis Wing</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Rakhi Bahini</b>
<b>RPA</b>	<b>Revolutionary People's Army</b>
<b>RSO</b>	<b>Rohingya Solidarity Organisation</b>
<b>SALW</b>	<b>Small Arms and Light Weapons</b>
<b>SC</b>	<b>Supreme Court</b>
<b>SKS</b>	<b>Sena Kalyan Sangstha</b>
<b>SSD</b>	<b>Social Service Department</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>
<b>UN</b>	<b>United Nations</b>
<b>UNIIMOG</b>	<b>United Nations Iran Iraq Military Observer Group</b>

<b>UNIKOM</b>	<b>United Nations Iraq Kuwait Observation Mission</b>
<b>UNMIH</b>	<b>United Nations Mission n Haiti</b>
<b>UNPKF</b>	<b>United Nations Peace Keeping Mission</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>United States of America</b>
<b>WAB</b>	<b>Women Affairs Bureau</b>
<b>WB</b>	<b>World Bank</b>

## **PREFACE**

Democracy, state, civil military are the most debatable lexicons in the political theories as they have different institutional structures. In most of the developing and least developed countries, it is the nature of the state system determines the effectiveness of both civilian and military life. Each state should be like any other, if every state possesses ultimate power and exercises a set of definite functions. But states are dissimilar, they differ in the way they behave and in the way they accumulate, articulate and exercise political power. If the state functioning's not well organised on the basis of rule of law, there would be the highest possibilities for military takeover and politicization of civil society. So, one could say that a well-controlled and disciplined military and a vibrant civil society could play huge role in making the state system more responsive and organised. A dominated and vulnerable civil society can become a handmaiden to the state in its project of controlling whole system and responsive civil society imposes limits upon the state power. Civil society could carry out its functions only when it itself is democratic. But military could be effective only if it operates under a well-established state system.

The proposed study endeavors to differentiate and analyze the spaces and interface of civil-military in the context of Bangladesh. It also intends to enquire into the role played by both to consolidate democracy in Bangladesh. Civil society groups are seen to articulate a set of socially responsible demands and largely positive public actions that can help to balance the tendencies of state and market institutions to overwhelm the interests of citizens. It's a fact that a vigilant civilian can make an unresponsive state and military to responsive and well-disciplined to the demands of the people. The amounting incapability of Bangladesh state/government, politicized nature of civil society and vulnerability to military coup can be understood with the various studies on it. Absence of democratic structure, role of politics in military, assumed role of franchise state and parallel government by both military and civil society, elite nature of military etc., reflect the negative sides of state system in the country. But most of the studies have ignored to look at the growth process and distortion of civil society and military in Bangladesh since its inception. It also analyzes the role of both civil society and military in consolidating democracy in Bangladesh. The study focuses on the reasons why civil society and military have found to be

weak and ineffective in relation to politics, policy making and democracy and the scope of the study lies in the explanation of these statements.

The study found that there are some areas still remains unexplored in the realm of civil military relations in Bangladesh. Whatever the number of studies have done on CMR in Bangladesh, all attempted to look at factionalism, politicization and lack of civil military cooperation in Bangladesh. But a comprehensive analysis has not made on military's role in consolidating democracy or making the peoples representatives more responsible and transparent to the demands of people. Studies found that the history of civil military relation in Bangladesh is not the history of civil military cooperation. It clashed each other at several stages and civilian system had been politicized badly and had negative impacts on CMR. But at the same time, at each stage of political developments in Bangladesh, there was also attempt to balance civil military equation through civilian procedures. Another research gap noted is there was not much study on Bangladeshi's trust on military to take over the power from civilian system when issues rise. The 2007-2008 military backed caretaker government as an attempt to consolidate democracy by strengthening democratic institutions and military's role in socio, political and economic transformations of the country are viewed and taken up to explore new facts as a new area. The study uses Marxist Leninist analysis on military and its impacts on civil military relations as a tool to understand the level of institutionalization of civil military relations in Bangladesh. Observations of academicians, politicians, military personnel, students etc., are incorporated in the study after conducting a sampling study.

After understanding the dearth areas of civil military relations in Bangladesh, the study has identified some major research gaps. It also directed this research to develop scientific research questions as stated here: to understand the relevant theoretical discourses on civil military relations, especially in the context of Bangladesh, to examine the evolution and various phases of civil military relations in Bangladesh, to examine the level of the institutionalization of both civilian political procedures and military, to analyze the political orientation of military and economic agendas during various regime, to highlight the impacts of factionalism and group conflicts on civil military relations, to scrutinize the dominant position of military and the failure of civilian succession in Bangladesh, to summarize the growth-process and distortion of civil-

military relations, and to examine the relevance and role of balanced civil-military relations for a vibrant democracy in Bangladesh.

Therefore, the research intends to look at the total history of civil military relations in Bangladesh and from there only, study examines the earlier nature and its present turn of civil military relations in Bangladesh. Followed by research questions, the study carries out relevant research questions. Among them, some of the important are what are the relevant theoretical discourses on civil military relations, especially in the context of Bangladesh? What were the major phases and evolution of civil military relations in Bangladesh? How did the social composition influence civil military relations? What are the levels of institutionalization of military and civilian political procedures? What were the levels of exerting pressure on government by military for more budgetary allocations? How did the political orientation of military, group politics and factionalism hamper balanced civil military relations? How does a balanced civil-military relations help to consolidate a vibrant democracy in Bangladesh?

**Chapter I**  
**Introduction**



# **Chapter I**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Civil military relations in Bangladesh have been subjected to several changes in its nature for the last four decades. Though the inception of Bangladesh as a new state in South Asia ended the mass killing and established democratic administrative set up, the leaders of the state were failed to run Bangladesh as a peaceful and developing country. The question why developing and least developed countries are prone to either military intervention in politics or plunging into over politicized civilian and politicized military set up always put the researchers in interrogative gear. While discoursing about civil military relations, the general assumption relies on civilian supremacy over military to make the state system more stable and peaceful. But here in the context of Bangladesh, one could incite examples of military's involvement to stabilize the destabilized political system. So, one can state that civil military relations is a two way process where civilian control of military is highly needed and recommended and military support to the civilian governments would be highly preferred. This chapter basically intends to examine the studies on civil military relations, especially in the context of Bangladesh, research gaps in those studies and at last, it developed some research questions and hypotheses to direct this study to the right point.

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

Civil-military relations, particularly in political lexicons, emphasise on the observation that civilian control of the military is highly recommended, preferable and needed to military control of the state. The crucial component in explaining civil military relations in any where in the world is empirical and it eages to clarify how civilian surveillance, control and check over the military is maintained and established. Generally, many of the eminent academicians agree the fat that CMR refers to the deliberate and serious interactions between armed forces as institutions and the society they belong to. As per the views of scholars studied CMR in democratic countries asserted that CMR firms for the high quality efficient and technical management and control of security based on the norms, principles and values of democracy as well as of the various interrelated governmental agencies. It is also observed that in majority of the developed and

developing states where democracy prevails at its best could be able to maintain and run better civil military relations and of course, such CMR are being controlled by the elite decision making body. However many developing countries have failed to maintain civilian supremacy for longer periods. In these states run by civilian elites, the army occupies a relevant power source and base. It doesn't matter whether the army is being used by civilian elites at domestic and international level, but they use it to strengthen and maintain their superior position. But in some states, an active civil society keeps its vigilant eye on the excessive power used by executive organs of the state. To be precise, there should be a balance between civil society and military in its relation with each other.

Though there are number of studies have done on the concept of civil military relations, its balance and imbalance between each other, role of civil society in state formation and controlling military, role of military to restore democracy in Bangladesh, a comprehensive study has not done yet on the question of how politicized military and politicized civil society together played an undisputable role in degrading Bangladesh as a turbulent political system and role of a balanced civil-military relations in making it a democratically balanced state. The unholy nexus of politicized civil and military had worked effectively for political and personal purposes during Mujib, Zia, Ershad and after years. It's a fact that Bangladesh Army has been playing a significant factor in Bangladesh politics. The important questions going to address in this study are why Bangladesh still struggles to develop a very balanced kind of CMR? Why Bangladesh could not be able to follow the success stories of South American countries, for example-Brazil, Nicaragua and Chile? Why, after forty plus years of independence, the country still is vulnerable to military intervention and living under the shadow of the army? Before going into details of the core questions of this study, it is relevant to make an understanding of political system and nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh.

One of the core sections of this study is to re-look at the civil military relations in Bangladesh by examining Marxist Leninist theory on army and civil military relations. It tries to interpret civil military relations by looking at three stages of Marxist analysis on armies: role of armies in national liberation movement, role of army in socio, economic and political transformations of the society and role of army in stabilizing the political system. As an expansion of Marxist

understanding, the study developed a trajectory of four stages to measure the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh.

### **1.3 Civil-Military Relations in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh military has a legacy of coups which began during the Pakistan era. Because of its organisational skill, structure, recruitment, ideology, colonial and the Pakistan legacy, and the fact of its involvement in the liberation war, the army had a stronger position than any other organisation in the state. If any country gets independence with the help of its military, than the chances of military intervention into the politics of that a bigger role in governance of the country increases. After independence, the troop's image increases envisaging. Majority of the military personnel from Bengal played crucial part in helping the people's movement to gain freedom from Pakistan in the 1970s. People were selected, recruited and trained during this period and were trained and socialised under the shadow of Pakistan administration, particularly Ayub Khan's Martial Law.

In Pakistan, Bengali military officers were not treated equally and faced discrimination in salaries and promotion. Whenever, civil authorities failed to handle any serious crisis, like communal riots, natural calamity, or man-made problems and internal disturbance, civil authority took the help of the army to provide necessary administrative and logical support to the civil administration. In 1973, the economic situation in the country worsened. It was partly due to the decline of production, widespread corruption and inefficiency in management, and partly due to global inflation. At that juncture Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman ordered the armed forces to move to the aid of the civil authorities. In July 1973, a combined operation of the police, Rakhi Bahini and the Army resulted in the arrest of 200 'extremists' and 'miscreants,' and the recovery of a huge amount of arms and ammunition (Ahamed, 1988: 41- 43).

In Bangladesh civil-military relation started from the liberation war. The military was divided into two: those who were for the liberation of Bangladesh in the 1971 war and those who weren't. The Mukti Bahini was also one of the prominent liberation forces in the 1971 war. Bangladesh emerged victorious from the war with the help of the army. Therefore, army and politics were correlated during the war. Later, the army became the hero of the liberation and it thought its contribution was greater than the political leaders. Where military is directly involved

in a liberation war, after independence, the civil-military relation is affected and so was the case with Bangladesh and the Military began building pressure on the government to increase the defence budget (Veena 1991: 61).

Military in Bangladesh began to intervene in political affairs because of the weak political institutions, less organised political parties, weak economy and high level of social mobilisation and also because the military was seen as freedom fighters. According to Dilara Choudhury, lack of democratic tradition, lack of well organised political parties, and the role of civil inception were not imbued with democratic values and principles (Choudhury 1987: 23-33). Because Bangladesh was initially a part of Pakistan and it did not have a setup of democratic institution, therefore liberal democratic political values and ethos could not be nurtured fully. Political parties were not fully organised due to lack of democratic orientation and experience. Bangladesh thus lags far behind in stable party system. Moreover, intense factionalism and party-splits are not only contributing to organizational weakness and a very low level of institutionalization in Bangladesh, but also in institutional fragmentation (Rahman 1986: 61).

The military during the Liberation War period was highly politicized. Even in the post-liberation period the military could not become apolitical. This approach guided the military to take part in the political affairs of the country. The military always look for its share in the decision making process of Bangladesh. In the post-liberation period the military failed to distinguish its role in the Liberation War to that of the civilian leadership. The military was always proud of its role and contribution in the Liberation War. This perception always guided the military to think itself as a part of the political decision making (Maniruzzaman 1976: 119).

Sometimes personal interests and vendetta of the military personals have also instigated coups. In Bangladesh, the society is underdeveloped and most of the people live in the rural area. They depend only on agriculture and their living standard is very poor. Therefore, they are easily mobilised by the elite class politicians for their own benefits. Socio-economic policies which were pursued by the ruling Pakistan elite class divided Bangladesh society into elite and non-elite and created the civil-military oligarchy in Bangladesh. Bangladesh's praetorian society has high social mobilisation but low level of institutionalisation. The lower-ranked military personals represent the poor and agrarian community of Bangladesh. On the other hand, the top

echelons of the military represent the elite class of Bangladesh. This class differences often instigate a feeling of deprivation which latter on culminated into military coups (Riaz 1998: 56).

There are several articles directly deals with civil military relations in Bangladesh. Articles 61, 62 and 63 in the constitution of Bangladesh deal with defence services and civil-military relations (Abdul 2016: 437). The President, head of the state, is the supreme command of the armed forces. War cannot be declared without the assent of the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament). Parliament made a law for recruitment of the defence services. Therefore, defence services work under the control of the parliament. According to the Constitution no institution of the country is above the constitution or law; be it governance institutions like the executive, legislative, judiciary or the defence services (Abdul 2016: 444).

A leader is one who gives direction to the state. But when the leaders fail to deliver, a vacuum is created and the country falls in to anarchical conditions which affect almost everything including peace, law and order. In this situation the military steps in to with the justification rescue the nation. Bangladesh has faced the same kind of the problems and given rise to the problem of hunger, unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, terrorism, and fundamentalism and the military has stepped in. Therefore, the elite class of the society also sometimes use or reassign these issues for their political benefit. Most of times it is the military that grabs power when there is no powerful charismatic political leader to run the country, especially when political parties do not have faith in each other.

Bangladesh has adopted the British style of parliamentary democracy. However, this system has never been given a fair chance to function due to the prolonged authoritarian and military-bureaucratic rule. There are many reasons for the failure of the democratic structure in Bangladesh. These include a combination of weak institutions, patrimonial politics, personalized political parties, patron-clientrelationships, and the absence of political consensus. This has resulted into a partial democracy dominated by pervasive corruption, lack of transparency, norm less behaviour, absence of public accountability, and political instability (Kochanek 2000: 530-531).

In the united Pakistan and later on in Bangladesh , ‘civil and military bureaucracies were more highly developed than the political parties, and the military had strong incentives to move into the institutional vacuum on the input side of the political system and to attempt to perform interest aggregation functions’ (Huntington 1968: 85). Since 1971 little has changed in Bangladesh. The civil and military bureaucratic establishments of the country do reflect a comparatively high degree of autonomy and complexity (Bertocci 1982: 992).

Normally the military institutions in the developing countries are more adaptive, cohesive, complex and coherent as compared to the civil institutions. Thus, military institutions become potential contenders for power. In the post-liberation period, the military did not strictly confined to professional affairs and after the coup of 7 November 1975, a strong collaboration of military and bureaucracy was established in Bangladesh (Islam 1984: 556). After the military coups, the bureaucracy implemented all policies made by the military government. Therefore, the military regime and civil bureaucracy shared good relationships with each other. The military has to consolidate power at national and local level, therefore they need the help of civil bureaucracy to consolidate power. The civil bureaucracy can turn a state into an “administrative state”. In the administrative state, the civil-military bureaucracy adopts, on the one hand, various measures for its increasing dominance in the state apparatus, and seeks, on the other, legitimacy for the regime through various means (Islam 1984: 556).

#### **1.4 Survey of the Literature**

Since the study intends to cover civil military relations in Bangladesh since its inception to 2012, it would be highly required to cover several themes related to the subject. A comprehensive analysis of theoretical discourses on civil military relations, political developments in Bangladesh, politicization of military and its impacts on civil military relations etc., are to be covered. The core objective of this section are to develop a clear understanding on the areas and find out research gaps, which would help to direct, investigate and explore new areas. In order to get a clear picture, the literature adequately related with the civil military relations in Bangladesh can be categorized into following themes:

- 1) Civil-Military Relations: A Theoretical Framework
- 2) Political Developments and Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh: Era of Mujibur Rahman: (1971-1975)
- 3) Era of Ziaur Rahman: (1975-1981)
- 4) Era of General Hussain Muhammed Ershad: (1982-1990)
- 5) Political Developments and Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh: (1991-2012)
- 6) Military Legacy and Contemporary Democracy

### **1.5 Civil-Military Relations: A Theoretical Framework**

Civil society and military has been played a huge role in the formation, growth process and pattern of all states in the world. Peace and stability of any country immensely depend on balanced civil military relations. One could see different patterns and levels of civil military relations in the countries of Europe, Asia and Africa. It would be more prevalent and recognized in western countries as they had a long tradition of rule of law and democracy. The vigilant constitutional measures keep the military in its professional standards and aloof from politics. At the same time, it gives civil society a space to discuss more comprehensive and genuine responses on all matters of society, so as in the case of military. But in states with low political culture and tradition, the idea of civil military relations is very complex and shrouded in ambiguity. The failure to establish political democracy still drags the civil military relations behind. States with minimal political culture and traditions have been characterized by either balanced relations or regular conflict between civil society and military.

The history of civil-military relations can be seen and traced to the works of many eminent scholars. Early scholar's of this aspects including Tzu, Clausewitz etc. emphasized that the army's duty is to serve the people and the nation as a whole and the army is primarily the utmost servant of thenation. Civil–military relations elucidate the fact that the bond between civilian system including the commoners as a whole and the army departments and other segments are established to protect the society and the nation as whole. But if one narrow down the definition of CMR, it clears the strong bond between the civiliansystem or elected representatives of people of a given society and state and its army. Much of academic researches on civil-military relations normally explainCMR on the basis of its normative assumption thatis clearly state that

civilian control, constant check and superiority over military is highly preferable to make clear the fact that state runs on straight path. The crucial and relevant point CMR researchers always examine is its empirical credibility that keenly focuses how a vigilant and superior civilian authorities control over the army is technically and legally established and smoothly maintained.

Samuel E. Finer work, *The Man on the Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* is one of the examples of the classical approach to the study of military relations (Finer 1975). He developed a broad range of concepts designed to conceptualize, analyze and explain the relations between civil political leaders and military. It is a fundamental idea by Finer that there is a close relation between the political culture of a country and the means of power that the military can use towards the civil leaders. He distinguishes between four different types of societies that each makes it likely that certain means will be used by the military. In modern societies the military will most likely try to use official constitutional channels in order to gain influence. In developed societies it will use blackmail and intimidation. In societies with low political culture it will try to change the civil leaders in order to serve its own means and in countries with minimal political culture it will rule itself (Finer 1975: 12).

The primary means by which this happens is according to Finer through forms of action that are to some extent overlapping as it is indicated in the below overviews. There is a succession in these forms of actions that means that those related to societies where the civil leadership has full control over the state are at top while those most associated with societies where the military has the upper hand are below. Finer examines his central concepts of military control as forms of control and mix of means. Influence, blackmail, displacement and supplantment are some of the relevant prevailing forms of control. Constitutional channels, competition with civil authorities, intimidation of civil authorities, threats of stop for cooperation and violence against civilians, will not defend civil authorities, violence against civil authorities etc are important ways of control. Finer distinguishes between cases where the military decides which civilians are to form government (displacement) and cases in which the military forms government by itself (supplantment) (Finer 1975: 14).

In his book on civil-military relations, *The Soldier and the State*, Samuel P. Huntington elucidates the conflicts between the two varying aspects as a clash between the norms, values, perceptions and views kept by army personnel and also the attitude and views kept by by



civiliansytwm. Basically, one could cite it as a clash or contrast between conservatives and liberals where liberals always have the popular support (Huntington 1957). It is clear that the army's functions and duties are entirely different from civilian world. The army is inherently occupied important place in the state system but it should be kept under the domain control of civilian system. At the same time, there were occasions where military occupies or tries to gain supreme position over civilian system. So it would be preferable to create legal framework and vindicate it to maintain the dominance of civilian system over military. What Huntington thought of to solve this acute political and technical problem is professionalism; professionalism of military and control over military. In his study of officer corps, he recommends to develop professional attitude of military and its loyalty towards civilian system. He understood the fact that though academicians call officers as professionals, but actually they are professionals, they are not entitled to known as professionals but tradesmen or skilled craftsmen (Huntington 1957: 127).

Huntington keenly focussed on four aspects of the army as an institution: discipline, structure, order, and self-sacrifice. The relevance of four aspects could be compared with the actions of the army in history and its future prospects. Why he stresses on army's professional character could be its possession of power. But to Huntington both the army and its power are the deliberate creation of people and their representatives. Therefore, a constant vigilance and deliberate control over the army is necessary and never be loosened. And again, Huntington's professionalism of the army could be explained in another way. It is assumed that civilian interference on army can be avoided. If the army's resources and other power bases are being used by civilian leaders to take revenge on their political opponents, then the question of professionalism from civilian part is problematic. So, professionalism of army and civilian system should be balanced and maintained to develop better civil military relations. Why it is necessary to maintain balanced civil military relations, why one should not take one over other, answers are simple and it is needed and relevant to sustain democracy (Huntington 1957: 223).

What military is supposed to maintain is strict adherence and obedience to the civilian system. At the same time, it is the responsibility of civilian system to define the objectives of any military actions. It is also relevant to keep in mind that once the motives or objectives of any military action is being defined, let it give to the military officers to decide what could be the possible way

to achieve their aims or motives. If there finds excessive control and intervention on army by the civilian system, there are the possibilities of backlashes and clashes between both segments of the state (Huntington 1957: 249). The problem always counter the civilian system is deciding its dividing lines on where to start and where to pause. If the amount of control over military is too much, it could result in dissatisfaction of army personnels and could break their morale. If the control is too low, it also could result in the military intervention in politics or militarized political system. Therefore, Huntington's dictum on CMR stands for the better management of military by better civilian system.

Objective civilian control was the answer put forwarded by Huntington to solve or sort out these impending issues in civil military relations. On the question of excessive civilian control over military, there would be serious repercussions on military and its efficiency. As per his objective civilian control, the direction from civilian system to the military would be intrusive and detailed. There would be more military interests and the military has all the privileged rights to decide on security issues within the country but under the strong framework of civilian system. He was also posed questions on effectiveness of civilian system as it is incredibly needed to control and make military very effective and responsive towards the society. In order to sort out these issues, Huntington put forwarded two aspects to shape the imperatives of civilian control over the military: functional and societal (Huntington 1957: 171). Again in order to understand the crux of these aspects, he has divided the societal imperatives into two: ideology and structure. By elucidating the term ideology, Huntington means a liberal anti-military, conservative pro-military, fascist pro-military and Marxist anti-military. But by explaining structure he demarcates the legal-constitutional framework which is highly and importantly needed to guide the political affairs and civil-military affairs (Huntington 1957: 172).

The much debated theory of Huntington clarified each and every aspects of civil military relations which lay genuine and creative foundation for democracy. By quoting incidences from American political system and civil military relations, he adds that the above mentioned ideological and structural segments of his theory are unchanging in the United States. If it is going in that way, the role of functional imperative would be totally descriptive for varying changes and differences in civilian control and it will have impacts on the military security aspects. To be precise, it is understood that if the external threats are very less in numbers, then

the role of army in intervening into each and every segments of state's life would be minimal and less. At the same time, if the threats from inside and outside are high, then there would be the presence of military everywhere and it gives relevant role to sort out any issues. Huntington also points out the transmutation effect of military at the time of external threats. He suggests that though the threats are high, military has to go hand in hand with the principles of liberalism and democracy. This transmutation effect will be active for short periods, for example engages in a war, but will not assure military security (Huntington 1957: 261).

One of the other major theoretical debates generated in the realm of political science, international relations and security studies was by Morris Janowitz in the year 1960 by publishing his book *The Professional Soldier* (Janowitz 1960). He introduced a dictum which was almost equal to what Huntington suggested. There are clear cut differences between civilian system and military. Both must be operated and vindicated with the provisions mentioned in the liberal democratic norms. Janowitz considered the fact that there should be attempts to clear all the dangers create both civilian and military system on democracy. Both segments of governance have to maintain professionalism and they should strictly adhere to the laws of the land. Janowitz introduced a theory of convergence in which he stresses the fact that the army doesn't need any external threats to be active in the society and state. There are plethoras of other reasons which are being driven by military to occupy a crucial role in the system. This theory pointed out two different aspect of civilian system: civilianization of the military and militarization of society. He adds that why it is being called military for it has its own strategic and inherent features rather than civilian system which is the direct reflection of society. Janowitz realizes that there would be maximum possibilities for clashes between civilian world and military world as both has its own peculiar nature and established interests. At the same time, the author agrees that there should be clear cut and established legal framework to make civilian control over the military. So, by introducing Convergence theory, what Janowitz means is the role of military in understanding its responsibility towards society (Janowitz 1960: 13).

How one can make it sure that military should be the direct reflection of society too. The social composition of military can be another relevant aspect in convergence theory. If the social representation of the army is direct and clear, then there would be high level of social responsibility can be visualized among army personnel. The more societal reflection in army

gives the more social responsibilities. It eventually develops a sense of respect and obedience towards the civilian system. What Huntington developed is a dictum to control the military by civilian system but what Janowitz created is to develop a sense of norms within army personnel to respond to society sensibly. This convergence theory helped the policy makers to diminish the existing difference.

Charles Moskos introduced Institutional parameter to study about the military organization and military change by relooking at the comparative aspects and changes which happened in the studies of civil military relations for the few decades (Moskos 1977). By introducing this new theory, Moskos helped the area to understand and measure the level of civil military relations across the globe since the cold war. It stresses the fact that the army was going away from its institutional nature and these days, it has been showing a kind of occupational character. At the institutional level, one could only observe the institutional features and obligations of military, but if one looks at the military on the basis of occupational nature, there would be more social reflection within army visible. Therefore, the periods of seeing military as just institution is over, these days, military has been performing several societal functions too. Such understanding would enrich the studies on civil military relations across the globe (Moskos 1977: 129).

Peater D. Feaver came up with another hypothesis on civil military relations which world wide known as Agency theory. He openly rejected Huntington's theory of civilian control over the military (Feaver 2004). By taking the principles and ideas of micro economics, feaver explains how the personnel in superior position try to influence those in a subordinate role. In order to explain this analysis, he adds two concepts: working and shirking. As he followed conventional understanding of democracy in civil military relations, he stresses that the principal agent of policy making is civilian leaders and what the military has to do is implement it. Here, he introduced the army or military as an agent of the civilian system to carry out and vindicate the policies and programmes initiated by civilian system. At the same time, military may shirk means it goes beyond the control of civilian system to achieve its own established interests.

The most important question is how to make it sure that agent will obey the principal. The theory predicts that if the amount of control that principal uses on agent is low, then there would be high possibility of breaching the framework by agent. If the level of principal's control over the agent is high and well established, then there would be strict obedience by agent towards the principal.

If agent is responding well, principal resorts to intrusive method to regain the control over agent. Such intrusive methods can be many including inspections, reports, reviews of military plans, and detailed control of the budget, and for Congress, committee oversight hearings and requiring routine reports (Feaver 2004: 261). To be precise, military should not be shirked from its assigned duties as it is one of the prime agents of the state like civilian system. Whatever be the actions carried out, the agent has come under and work in accordance with the laws of the civilian system.

Feaver stated his theory of agency was different from all his predecessors as it was mainly deductive and highly established on the basis of the principles of democracy and liberalism rather than on factual evidence and it could help better the present day to day affairs of the states while dealing civil military relations. It could be looked as a mixture of both Huntington's institutional and Janowitz's theories. As stated above, Huntington keenly explains the bond between civilian system and the military. At the same time, Janowitz emphasizes the bond of the military and society. In short what agency theory substantiates is the link between both Huntington and Janowitz understanding of civil military relations (Rabindranath 2016: 15).

Another formulation on civil military relation has been propounded by Rebecca L. Schiff offered and it is known as Concordance. Author states that after seeing the bond and nature of civil military relations across the globe, there should be clear cut difference between civilian system and military. Civilian system must develop a framework to deal with the military segment of the state. As the civilian and military aspects different physically and ideologically, we need to have different framework to maintain the relations (Schiff 2009). The author introduced this theory as an alternative to other major theories on civil military relations. It stresses on the question that whether military needs to intervene in civilian system and politics. If yes, under what circumstances and conditions military can do that. It never gives any preference to the military to intervene in domestic politics but carried out an enquiry to know the situations and circumstances which prompted the military to go into politics. Basically, there are not that much differences between civilian system and military as both reflect the society as whole. Therefore, it does not demand division between the civilian and military segment. Following the developments and explanations, the writer explained that there are three societal institutions: including the army, governing political and civilian elites and cooperative arrangement of citizens

(Schiff 2009: 19). The theory states that given below are the three major societal compositions of the military segments of the state: the political decision-making process, the method of recruiting military personnel and the style of the military. Therefore, social representations of both army and the civilian system equally valid, so where are the differences. It makes clear that zero level difference could make the civil military relations ratio, equation and cooperation more stable.

The author argues that the above mentioned three parameters are happening without any delay with respect to the four indicators, then there is less chance of military intervention in domestic politics. In the work, *The Military and Domestic Politics*, the author makes her understanding clear by introducing and presenting six case studies: U.S., post-Second World War period, American Post-Revolutionary Period (1790–1800), Israel (1980–90), Argentina (1945–55), India post-Independence and 1980s, Pakistan (1958–69). The author was very much confused by portraying these cases asking the major theoreticians that whether most of the debates on CMR are based on to know that the gap between civilian and military<sup>6</sup> is necessary or not. She poses that whether the separation between civilian system and the military was inevitable and likely necessary. These arguments, debates and discourses had been there in mainstream for a long time but questions on whether to control the gap between the two or to minimize the gap still remains prior concern for all policy makers (Schiff 2009: 291).

Alfred Vagts tried to look at this issue from an historical point of view emphasizing on the cases and experiences from German military stories (Vagts 1937). Before going into details, the author describes militarism as the state of a society that ranks military institutions and ways above the prevailing attitudes of civilian life and carries the military mentality into the civilian sphere. Another scholar, Louis Smith, emphasized the emerging issues and problems of constitutional and judicial control. These controls are there to control the military and the author suggests executive civilian control over military to make it sure that military won't cross any lines (Smith 1951). All these outcomes derived off the discussions come from American experience which had a strong influence there in the cold war and post cold war politics. How can we expect that the same influence can be reached out to the civil military relations in other countries which were not even touched by cold war. It was evident in the case of U.S.A that they could be able to maintain strong control over military at any point of their turbulent political history. The civilian military relations in USA often considered as high level and it is capable of developing a

stable and balanced civil military relations. It had happened because of the high political culture that people maintained throughout the years. But will any one expect the same situations in all other countries. So there should be control over military if military run beyond the founding principles of state and democracy.

During the first few years of civil military relations, there were scholars demanded for the strict control of civilian system over military. They were demanding for civilian supremacy over military. This period started from the end of world war second and ended in 1973. The main concern of scholars of civil military relations of this time was to define civil-military relations. It also carried out with other concepts such as subjective objective control, professionalism and possible ways and means to control the military by the civilians (Abdul 2010: 19). The second period begun from 1973, was noted several relevant incidences in the history of civil military relations and continued till the end of Cold War. Scholars of these periods mentioned the Vietnam War and how the volunteer force changed the nature of the armed forces. Scholars also led this discussion to interrogate into the fact that whether it helped the systems to widen or reduce the gap between civilian and military system. With the end of cold war, the third period started. During these periods, many scholars have interrogated into the relevance of maintaining gap between civil military. The concepts of bond, equation and cooperation between civil military have been risen this period (Abdul 2010: 20).

Most of the scholars agreed the fact that a gap does exist, but at the same time, there is huge contempt by other section of scholars saying that whether the gap matters. But one thing noted during this stage was there weren't that much discussion posed on the question of sufficient and adequate laws and policies to sort out the issue. At the same time, there were group of scholars criticizing that the debates on civil military relations revolved around widening or minimising the gap and the reasons for such reactions. It was also noted that the discussions on civil military relations regarding the gap of control which started early in the 1950s continued till the 1990s. at the end of cold war, there were several peace treaties signed which might have introduced new lines in the studies of civil military relations. The relevant point here to note was that most of scholars tried to look at civil military relations beyond America (Rabindranath 2016: 481).

As per the views of the scholars, the gap dictum always exist and revolve around two aspects; notion of cultural gap and the notion of connectivity. The very first one elucidates the existing differences in the values, norms and culture of the two worlds; civilian system and military system. The second aspects define the lack of understanding, communication between military and civilian system. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the the level of norms and values maintained by both world and it also relevant to enhance the communication channel between them. Many of the scholars stated that there isn't any difference between civilian and military segments so it should be copperated and maintain civil military equation. But some scholars argued that there are inherent differences in the nature and working styles of civilian and military aspcts. Therefore, a clear cut strategy has to develop to run both. Charles Maynes pointed out the fact that military majorily composed of perosnnl from lower socio-economic strata woud not be fought for the interests of elite military heads (Maynes 1998). Scholars like Tarr and Roman stated that there are also the presences of military and civilian elites and they maintain their own strategic interests within their own realm. But cooperation between them would help them to politicize the whole system into a bad lelevl. Ultimately, it will hamper an institutionalized civil militarized relation in any countries in the world (Tarr and Roman 1998). Chivers believed that the differences between these world is real but not that much big so it has to be irrelevant to carry on (Chivers 1999).

One of the major debates instigates each researcher to go beyond cultural or connectivity gap classification is the organizational nature of both civilian and military realm. The organizational nature of civilian system is strictly adhere to constitution of that particular land and even in the case of military, though there are some exceptions, it has to come under the relam of civilian system or laws of the land. Sometimes, scholars argue, military has been used by civilian system to go beyond the norms of society and evenetually it hampers a balanced civil military relations. The institutional character of both arena of civil military decides a particular line to behave. It helps both to maintain and control the population of each. Breaking the institutional lines would invite more troubles and military's extra acts always supervised and judged. Therefore, institutiona character or behavior of both civilian and military segments need to be understood and analysed in parallel to cultural and connectivity gap.



In the long running of civil military relation in any forms of governance, the supreme or improved control over military by civilian system is necessary. In the case of cultural gap analysis, it matters if the military crosses its boundary and try to dominate civilian system. In order to develop an effective control over the military, even the civilian system has to strictly follow the constitutional laws of the land. But is also fact that the debate settled on without deciding whether the gap is too wide or not. If it is found that the cultural gap would be too wide, it does mena that it will hamper the civil military relations and may put the whole state system in trouble. It happens because of lack of communication and srious misunderstanding between tworlds: civilian and military system. But some scholars agree the fact that cultural gap in any systems to be expected and it is not dangerous. In many of the cases, studies found that low political culture or culture of political conservatism and also the partialised role of some military personnel infavour of some political persons are visible and such acts would kill the possibilities for better civil military relations (Chivers 1999: 32).

Understanding the fact that there is already gaps exist and thre are the high needs to find solutions to it, many of the scholars came up with some interesting suggestions and recommendations. All these suggestions reflect an attempt to correct the problems arising out of it and aimed to narrow the gap. Here, we could cite some of major relevant suggestion as three: The first one states that the military should reach out to the realm of civilian system as the former destined to work under the latter. The second oint cleares that the civilian leaders must articulates its provisions, vision and mission to the military heads. In turn military has to give positive response to the civilian system (Chivers 1999). The final recommendation suggest that the most forbidden way to solve the gap issues between civil military is engaging in effective and practical ways and means to call for dialogue and proper communication and understanding. For that, bilateral education can be resorted and in which both the leaders of military and civilian system can be part of.

Ahmed has examined the political role of military in the Third World as they have experienced military coups more than any other part of the world. The author has highlighted the organizational superiority, corporate and national interest and internal autonomy of the military. He also discusses the differences between lower-class and middle-class interests. According to his observation middle-class interests may be affected both by the feudal interest and the highly

politicized workers and peasants. So the middle-class never supports military regime, but the lower-class have always supported it (Ahmed 1988).

Military intervention rarely occurs in countries marked by a high degree of political legitimacy. In any country military interventions generally take place when the civilian regimes suffer from the crisis of legitimacy. The author discusses civil-military relations, civilian socio-political institutions and participation of the people in political process in any country. Internal and external organizations along with domestic and international socio-economic and political condition cause the military to intervene in politics (Kabir 1999).

In order to understand the relevance of balanced and improved civil military relations in a state system, Julian Lider in his book *Military Force: An Analysis of Marxist Leninist Concepts* examined three dimensions to understand civil military relations and the role of military in any societies particularly in developing, third world and least developed countries (Lider1981). He added that the army has positive role in unifying the proletariat and waging a war against ruling elites and it will finally establish a just society. Immediately after the success of progressive forces against bourgeoisie, the role of the army has converted into socio, economic and political transformation. Thirdly, army has an interventionist role if the civilian system utterly fail to address the needs of the proletariats or if the civilian system replaced by governing elites (Lider, 67).

## **1.6 Political Developments and Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh**

### **i) Era of Mujibur Rahman: 1971-1975**

Democracy is an objective that nations strive to attain in an apparently endless process of evolution. *Iftekharuzzaman and Rahman in their article Transition to Democracy in Bangladesh: Issues and Outlook* have raised the fundamental question “what is democracy”, and the key tools that are needed for the smooth functioning of democracy. After independence, Bangladesh adopted the western pattern of democracy but failed to implement it. The authors have discussed the various policies of Mujib’s regime and its impact on the Bangladesh’s politics (Iftekharuzzaman and Rahman 1991: 95-126). The author has pointed out the meaning of democracy and has cited various definitions of democracy. According to him opposition political parties always save the democratic system by working as a ‘safety valve’. The author has also

advocated the role of opposition in two-party and multi-party system. He has observed that any representative system necessitates a strong opposition, as the opposition work as a substitute for the government (Hasanuzzaman 1998).

After first general election which was held on 7 March 1973, the Awami League won 292 out of 300 seats in the parliament and there was no official opposition in parliament (Maniruzzaman 1980). The Fourth Amendment to the constitution was passed without any debate or discussion in the parliament, which had its impact on democracy (Ahmed 1995). Huq in his article “Constitution Making in Bangladesh” has carefully observed the constitution of Bangladesh, fundamental rights and separation of powers among legislature, executive and judiciary (Huq 1980: 12-14). Maniruzzaman has examined the politics of the Student League and Left party’s demands in Bangladesh politics (Maniruzzaman 1982).

Samaddar in his article *Bangladesh Nationalism: A Thing of the Past* gives an idea of, and analyses Bengali Nationalism and Bangladesh Nationalism. According to the author Mujib’s nationalism was secular, cultural and political but the military regime’s nationalism was Islamic nationalism (Samaddar 1994). Author discusses the role of the aid given by U S and India in the domestic policy making of Bangladesh (Chakravarty 1995). According to Sobhan, state economy was highly depended on foreign aid during the Mujib’s regime. The author delves in to the planning commission’s role in Bangladesh economy (Sobhan 1993). Once the concept of independence failed, Mujib declared emergency in the country and took the post of president (Lifschultz 1979).

Jahangir in his article *Nature of Class struggle in the Bangladesh* discussed the Budgets of 1974 and 1975. Due to the unbalanced price hike of the basic goods all section of the country like peasants, workers, labourers, businessmen, bureaucrats, student politics and other section of the society suffered throughout the country (Jahangir 1980). Anisuzzaman in his article Bangladesh Nationalism has stated that Bangladesh failed to practice the idea of nationalism (Anisuzzaman 1980). The author has observed the importance of national security in strengthening democracy. He has also examined the Gross National Product and Gross Domestic Product, foreign aid and planned economic policy of Bangladesh (Nuruzzaman 1991). Husain has argued that in Bangladesh religion was never separated from politics. They depend on each other and religion always interferes in the political affairs of the country (Husain 1991). The impacts of

Bangladesh's culture on politics and on democracy have been examined by the author. He also discusses the emergence of Jamat-e-Islam in Bangladesh (Gupta 1997). The author examines Jamaat-e-Islam's role from Pakistan to Bangladesh in his article "The Emergence of Jamaat-e-Islam in Bangladesh" (Bahadur 1997: 67).

Democracy in Bangladesh has been affected by religious politics, which was started during the Mujib regime and strengthened by the military regimes of Zia and Ershad. As it was incorporated in article 12 of the constitution of Bangladesh secularism would be one of the key principle of Bangladesh. Maulana Bhasani demanded in 1972 that politics should not be allowed in mosques. But there was no way to prevent the misuse of places of worship where secular ideas were systematically attacked. Later on Article 12 was deleted and a new clause was added to Article 25 which explained that "the state shall endeavour to strengthen, consolidate and preserve the fraternal relationship between the Muslim states on the basis of Islamic solidarity" (Anisuzzaman 1997: 11). Mujib's bureaucratic reforms threatened the existence of the very class that supported the independent movement. This weakened the process of all the political, economic and bureaucratic institutions (Ahmed 1995).

The implementation of one party system called Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) was an autocratic system which it did not solve the basic problems of Bangladesh (Jahan 2002). The army saw a political vacuum in the country because the opposition political parties were not very strong, so this space was filled by the army (Ziring 1992). As the various coups were executed, the army arrested and killed the Awami League workers and supporters. Though are army justified their actions by promising to end corruption, injustice and autocracy, these were only political statements and at the grass root level nobody addressed these problems (Ahmed 1995). Sobhan examines the merits of the liberal two-party democratic system and suggests good governance and strong economy, political culture, role of civil society and global theory of the nationalism for the institutionalization of democracy (Sobhan 1993). The issues of the functions of democratic election and administration, Bangladesh's economic condition, foreign relations and aid given by foreign institutions, role of opposition political parties in opposing the economic policies have been thoroughly analyzed by author Jahan (Jahan 1980).

Immediately after the Independence of Bangladesh, the military was in strong position at the national level. Mujib's government failed to strengthened democracy and the economic condition

of the country was very fragile. Massive corruption and high price of the consumer goods, led to mass protest. The army was also angry with the government because it had not given sufficient budget allocation for the good condition of the army. This provoked the army to carry out a regime change (Ziring 1992). Jahan in her article *Bangladesh: Promise and Performance* observes the coup and counter coups started by junior army officers on 15 August. This coup was followed by another coup on 3 November 1975, by the senior military officers led by Brigadier Khaled Mosharraf. Further on 7 November 1975, a coup was engineered and guided by the Biplobi Gono Bahini, under the leadership of retired Colonel Abu Taher. Finally Ziaur Rahman emerged strong and a few months later he took over the power and imposed martial law in the country on 30 November 1976 (Jahan 2002).

## **ii) Era of Ziaur Rahman: 1975-1981**

Lifschultz examines why junior army officers went against the government, what was the role of Abu Taher and why successive coup makers failed (Lifschultz, 1979). Islam observed in his article “The State in Bangladesh under Zia (1975—81)” that when the junior officers declared coup against the government, Ziaur Rahman was not a dominate figure in the Bangladesh Army. The coup makers killed Mujib and all his family members except two daughters. They also killed the cabinet leaders and captured the political power (Islam 1984: 21). When the coup leader appointed the Pro-U S Awami League leader, Khondoker Mushtaq Ahmed as the president, Brigadier Khaled Musharraf started a counter coup against Mushtaq Ahmed and the junior army officers (Jahan 2002). Musharraf’s tenure was very short. On 7 November 1975, soldiers’ mutiny led by retired Colonel Abu Taher emerged in which the Biplobi Gono Bahini participated (Lifschultz 1979). Major-General Ziaur Rahman, head of the army, refused to support any military action against the August coup makers. On 7 November 1975, the coup was completed. Khaled Musharraf was arrested and Ziaur Rahman immediately appointed him-self Major General. The author has focused on the importance of Abu Taher’s role to solve the political crisis (Kukreja 1991).

The author observes that Zia followed the capitalist path for economic policy, increased the defence budget and started the process of Islamisation in Bangladesh (Kukreja 1991). He started founding the Jatiyatabadi Dal and Jatiyaganatantrik Dal (JAGADAL) and finally established the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (Chakravarty 1995). To prove his democratic credentials Zia built a

new political party in the name of Bangladesh Nationalist Party. He held presidential election in 1978 and parliamentary election in 1979. The author discusses the party structure and its working system (Islam 1984: 3).

Hossain focuses on the political mobilization and support base as well as the rural-urban recruitment of the BNP. He identifies the Islamic groups, pro-Beijing radicals along with the socio- economic background of the leaders of the BNP (Hossain 1988). Leadership, factional politics, ideology, economy, social culture, peaceful revolution, population control and the rural development program “gram sarkar”, which enhanced the possibilities of people to people contact in the villages and cities, have been broadly touched by the author (Islam 1984). He focused on the party’s performances in the parliamentary election of 1979 and presidential election of 1981 (Hossain 1988: 6). The author discusses the role of the opposition parties during the Zia regime in Bangladesh (Hasanuzzaman 1998).

After taking over power, Zia legitimised his military regimes by conducted a series of elections. According to Jahan, Zia’s system was neither a parliamentary nor a presidential one; rather it was based on authoritarian presidential democracy (Jahan 1980). The author has explained that the domination of the BNP member’s in civil, military and bureaucratic services strengthened Zia’s political platform. However the businessman and professionals remain permanent groups, which became evident from the results of 1979 parliamentary election. The author focuses on the political, economic and administrative crisis during Zia’s regime’s (Islam 1984). Sobhan discusses the last phase of Zia’s regime and also its political and economic culture of the regime (Sobhan 1993). Zia imposed martial law in April 1979. Failure of the civil administration had led to corruption, economic instability and worsened the law and order situation of Bangladesh. After capturing power Ershad blamed the democratic and constitutional process (Ahmed 1995). Deteriorating economic conditions led to an all opposition party agitation against the government that demanded parliamentary democracy (Hasanuzzaman 1998).

### **iii) Era of General Hussain Muhammed Ershad: 1982-1990**

In 1982, General Hussain Muhammed Ershad seized power in Bangladesh during a bloodless coup. Upon taking power, Ershad became the Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA), suspended the 1972 constitution, and banned all political parties. However, in 1983, he assumed

the presidency and by January 1986, he had restored full political activity in which his own party, the Jatiya Party took a prominent part. While Ershad was proclaimed the winner in a presidential election held in October 1986 under martial law, Bangladesh's opposition parties challenged the legitimacy of Ershad's regime. Despite the refusal of opposition parties to recognize the legitimacy of the Ershad regime, Ershad refused to step down. Starting in 1987, opposition groups organized mass demonstrations to demand Ershad's removal from the presidency (Barbara 1987: 67-73).

Opposition groups became mobilized after Ershad's introduction of the controversial District Council Bill in parliament that would allow military officers to serve on local district councils. On 23 July 1987, opposition groups planned mass public demonstrations in Dhaka, Chittagong, and Khulna. Following Ershad's orders, police fired on participating protesters, resulting in civilian casualties, and police arrested as many as 500 protesters across the country. By the fall of 1987, opposition groups had continued to coordinate efforts to put more pressure on the Ershad regime. On 28 October, Hasina and Khaleda Zia met – signaling a new phase of cooperation between the two leading opposition parties, the AL and BNP. Opposition groups planned a series of events that would begin 10 November, naming the action the “Siege of Dhaka” (James 1989: 122).

Ershad publicly rejected the opposition's call for his resignation, stating his intention to serve the remaining years of the term he won in the 1986 elections. At this point, while civil disobedience had rattled the Ershad regime, it had not been enough to bring the regime down. While what remained of the opposition attempted to regroup and tried to organize in 1988 and 1989, they faced continuous, intense repression by the Ershad regime and were plagued by internal divisions. On 4 December the opposition rejected Ershad's proposal. 100,000 people marched in the streets of Dhaka to demand the President's immediate resignation (Ataus 1987).

After Ershad was removed from power, a three-month neutral transitional government headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Shahabuddin Ahmed, declared a state of emergency, restored civil liberties, and was responsible for organizing elections on 27 February 1991. The ensuing 1991 election was the first democratic election ever held in the country, and while 73 parties participated, the AL and BNP dominated – marking the beginning of a persistent two-

party system in Bangladesh. The elections ultimately resulted in a BNP government, and Khaleda Zia was sworn in as Bangladesh's Prime Minister (Steven 1987).

### **1.7 Political Developments and Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh: 1991-2013**

The role of a neutral caretaker government in conducting free and fair election has been examined. On March 1996 the 13th Constitutional Amendment was passed in the Jatiya Sangsad. This amendment was significant in the sense that it deal with the formation, function and operational procedure of the neutral caretaker government. Article 58C of the constitution of Bangladesh gives authority to the President to appoint the chief of the caretaker government within 15 days of the dissolution of the Jatiya Sangsad. He shall be the retired chief justice of the Supreme Court. It is also important to notice that he would never be appointed to any political post. The chief of the caretaker government will also have to be free from any bias towards any political party (Datta 2004: 122-127).

Kabir examines the crisis of the caretaker government in Bangladesh. According to the author the institution of caretaker government has failed to gain faith of the opposition parties regarding its neutrality (Kabir 1999). Mohsin and Guhathakurta, examine the nature of opportunist politics in Bangladesh, in their article, "The Struggle for Democracy in Bangladesh" in Bangladesh the two main political parties Awami League and BNP are opportunists in that they joined hands with Jamaat-e- Islami, Jatiya Party and other ideologically alien political parties to come into power (Mohsin and Guhathakurta 2007: 52). Ahmed analysed that political corruption was continuously practiced by both the ruling and the opposition parties in Bangladesh (Ahmed 1997). In 2004 and 2005, Bangladesh was rated as the most corrupt country by Transparency International (Mohsin and Guhathakurta 2007:53). The Author highlights political violence, corruption and fake voter list as permanent issues in the elections of Jatiya Sangsad (Chowdhury 2003).

The periods 2002-2006, 2006-2008 and 2009-2013 have been remarked by major political developments in the history of Bangladesh. The first period was noted by the undemocratic move of Khaled Zia to use her political power to pollute democratic institutions of the country. Because of the constant hartals, political protests and demonstrations by opposition party, Awami League, people got fed up and due to peoples pressure, a military backed caretaker was



formed in the year 2006. Later, Sheikh Hasina came to power and tried to balance the political system, but Bangladesh was not away from crisis. Compared to previous years, Bangladesh has witnessed better civil military relations during these periods.

*Democracy and the Challenge of Development - A Study of Politics and Military Interventions in Bangladesh* (Ahmed 1995) reveals how the military rulers in third world countries tend to distort the social, economic and democratic fabric of the society through military interventions. The book provides an excellent perspective on the political history of Bangladesh. It depicts that the challenge to the existing and future leaders of Bangladesh will however remain the same: to be able to sustain a democratic order and at the same time achieve a desired economic growth despite all the constraints.

*Civil Society and Democracy in Bangladesh* (Khan and Kabir 2002) is a study on the role of the former in strengthening the latter in the country. Highlighting the role of the growing array of civil society organizations in putting politics on a desired track has indeed been a major objective of the discussion in the book. The book deals two distinct and yet inextricably linked issues in the context of Bangladesh-civil society and the political process and civil society and the people's empowerment. The title of the book suggests its critical importance to Bangladesh, given the state of politics and the level of people's empowerment.

*Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society* (Lewis 2011) is a seminal and scholarly work that makes compelling arguments for recognizing the importance of this rapidly developing nation on the world stage. It explores the developments of civil society organizations in Bangladesh. It has practical and usable debates on planning, growth and fund donors in Bangladesh. This book has the stamp of comprehensive thinking on critical aspects that are important for understanding, including how this strategically situated Asian country of more than one hundred sixty million people has evolved and reached its present situation, what now needs to be focused on and overcome in order to continue a transition to a sustained and equitable growth, and how an effective civil society is coming into being to help articulate and implement effective policies and nudging the state towards taking the action required to reach these goals.

## 1.8 Civil Military Legacy and Contemporary Democracy

The contemporary political developments and civil military relations are the by-products of political culture of Bangladesh and what Bangladesh has been experienced so far. As an important step in consolidating democracy, one could observe the formation of Care Taker Government in Bangladesh in the last two decades. Kabir examines the crisis of the caretaker government in Bangladesh. According to the author the institution of caretaker government has failed to gain faith of the opposition parties regarding its neutrality (Kabir 1999). Mohsin and Guhathakurta, examine the nature of opportunist politics in Bangladesh, in their article, *“The Struggle for Democracy in Bangladesh”* in Bangladesh the two main political parties Awami League and BNP are opportunists in that they joined hands with Jamaat-e-Islami, Jatiya Party and other ideologically alien political parties to come into power (Mohsin and Guhathakurta 2007: 52). Rahaman in his Article *“Origins and Pitfalls of Confrontational Politics on Bangladesh”* examined the parliamentary boycotts, strikes and hartals held by the opposition political parties in Bangladesh (Rahaman 2007). Ahmed analysed that political corruption was continuously practiced by both the ruling and the opposition parties in Bangladesh (Ahmed 1997). In 2004 and 2005, Bangladesh was rated as the most corrupt country by Transparency International (Mohsin and Guhathakurta 2007:53). The Author highlights political violence, corruption and fake voter list as permanent issues in the elections of Jatiya Sangsad (Chowdhury 2003).

Currently, the political scene in Bangladesh is dominated by the Awami League (AL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). The secular, centre-left AL, which has been in power since 2009, focuses on improving ties with India and limiting the influence of religion in politics. The Islamic, centre-right BNP leads the opposition and tends to be more nationalistic. Much of the political polarization is due to personal animosity between the leaders of the AL and BNP parties. The January 2014 elections were boycotted by the BNP and won by the AL, which has increased political tensions. However, chances are the AL government will sit out its term in office. Here, the question of military intervention or stable civilian regime is primarily depends on the political culture and qualities of leadership in Bangladesh (Erwin 2014).

Bangladesh is a state where one could apply and test all the theories of civil military relations. Though there are number of studies have done on the concept of civil military relations, its balance and imbalance between each other, role of civil society in state formation and controlling military, role of military to restore democracy in Bangladesh, a comprehensive study has not done yet on the question of how politicized military and politicized civil society together played an undisputable role in degrading Bangladesh as a turbulent political system and role of a balanced civil-military relations in making it a democratically balanced state. The unholy nexus of politicized civil society and military had worked effectively for political and personal purposes during Mujib, Zia and Ershad years (Rabindranath 2016).

The post 1991 years were also witnessed several incidents includes political orientation of military, impact of group conflicts, factionalism and shifting political loyalties on civil society and military. The military takeover of political power indicated the vulnerability of Bangladesh political system. At the same time, the attempts and role of civil society and military in restoring democracy and constitutional rule through caretaker government should not be ignored. To be precise, the focus of this study is to analyze the over politicization of civilian system and military and its impacts on Bangladesh from 1971 to 2012.

Civil-Military Relations very much depends on day-to-day interactions between political leadership and military leadership. But some incidents in the short history of Bangladesh mirrored the course of sweet-sour relation between them. For examples, i) Bangladesh Liberation war of 1971, ii) Military coup in 1975 August, iii) Killings on the 3rd November and the 7th November 1975 up-rise in cantonments, iv) Ershad's military coup in 1982 without bloodshed, v) A brief military disorder in 1996, vi) Proxy role-play of the military together with previous care taker government 2007-2008, vii) A failed military coup in December, 2011 and after (Abdul 2010).

In this context, a detailed analysis would be necessary to bring out the real nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh since 1971. A historical understanding of Bangladesh military, which inherited from Punjabi dominated military bureaucracy, would also help this study to identify the changes in military structure that introduced after independence. In order to make this study more genuine and relevant, it is understood that need to study the role of leadership and prominence of military rule in Bangladesh. The level of politicization of civil society and

military was high and intense in Bangladesh. So an attempt will also be made to understand the nature of civil society and military during various political regimes.

It also is understood that military intervention in politics cannot be prevented through a constitutional bar. Whereas rooting democracy firmly, steady economic growth, and sound law and order situation can keep the military away from mainstream politics. From all these above mentioned theoretical discourse on civil military relations, analysis of past and present political developments and civil military relations in Bangladesh, the proposed study intends to understand the growth process and distortion of civil military relation in Bangladesh by emphasizing on social origin, internal structure, and politicization of civil military relations, which has not been done so far.

### **1.9 Rationale and Scope of the Study**

Democracy, state, civil military etc are the most debatable lexicons in the political theories as they have different institutional structures. In most of the developing and least developed countries, it is the nature of the state system determines the effectiveness of both civilian and military life. Each state should be like any other, if every state possesses ultimate power and exercises a set of definite functions. But states are dissimilar, they differ in the way they behave and in the way they accumulate, articulate and exercise political power. If the state functioning's not well organised on the basis of rule of law, there would be the highest possibilities for military takeover and politicization of civil society. So, one could say that a well controlled and disciplined military and a vibrant civil society could play huge role in making the state system more responsive and organised. A dominated and vulnerable civil society can become a handmaiden to the state in its project of controlling whole system and responsive civil society imposes limits upon the state power. Civil society could carry out its functions only when it itself is democratic. But military could be effective only if it operates under a well established state system.

The proposed study endeavors to differentiate and analyze the spaces and interface of civil-military in the context of Bangladesh. It also intends to enquire into the role played by both to consolidate democracy in Bangladesh. Civil society groups are seen to articulate a set of socially responsible demands and largely positive public actions that can help to balance the tendencies

of state and market institutions to overwhelm the interests of citizens. It's a fact that a vigilant civilian can make an unresponsive state and military to responsive and well disciplined to the demands of the people. The amounting incapability of Bangladesh state/government, politicized nature of civil society and vulnerability to military coup can be understood with the various studies on it. Absence of democratic structure, role of politics in military, assumed role of franchise state and parallel government by both military and civil society, elite nature of military etc., reflect the negative sides of state system in the country. But most of the studies have ignored to look at the growth process and distortion of civil society and military in Bangladesh since its inception. It also analyzes the role of both civil society and military in consolidating democracy in Bangladesh. The study focuses on the reasons why civil society and military have found to be weak and ineffective in relation to politics, policy making and democracy and the scope of the study lies in the explanation of these statements.

### **1.10 Research Gaps**

The study found that there are some areas still remains unexplored in the realm of civil military relations in Bangladesh. Whatever the number of studies have done on CMR in Bangladesh, all attempted to look at factionalism, politicization and lack of civil military cooperation in Bangladesh. But a comprehensive analysis has not made on military's role in consolidating democracy or making the peoples representatives more responsible and transparent to the demands of people. Studies found that the history of civil military relation in Bangladesh is not the history of civil military cooperation. It clashed each other at several stages and civilian system had been politicized badly and had negative impacts on CMR. But at the same time, at each stage of political developments in Bangladesh, there was also attempt to balance civil military equation through civilian procedures. Another research gap noted is there was not much study on Bangladeshi's trust on military to take over the power from civilian system when issues rise. The 2007-2008 military backed caretaker government as an attempt to consolidate democracy by strengthening democratic institutions and military's role in socio, political and economic transformations of the country are viewed and taken up to explore new facts as a new area. The study uses Marxist Leninist analysis on military and its impacts on civil military relations as a tool to understand the level of institutionalization of civil military relations in

Bangladesh. Observations of academicians, politicians, military personnel, students etc are incorporated in the study after conducting a sampling study.

After understanding the dearth areas of civil military relations in Bangladesh, the study has identified some major research gaps. It also directed this research to develop scientific research questions as stated here: to understand the relevant theoretical discourses on civil military relations, especially in the context of Bangladesh, to examine the evolution and various phases of civil military relations in Bangladesh, to examine the level of the institutionalization of both civilian political procedures and military, to analyze the political orientation of military and economic agendas during various regime, to highlight the impacts of factionalism and group conflicts on civil military relations, to scrutinize the dominant position of military and the failure of civilian succession in Bangladesh, to summarize the growth-process and distortion of civil-military relations, and to examine the relevance and role of balanced civil-military relations for a vibrant democracy in Bangladesh.

Therefore, the research intends to look at the total history of civil military relations in Bangladesh and from there only, study examines the earlier nature and its present turn of CMR in Bangladesh. Followed by research questions, the study carries out relevant research questions. Among them, some of the important are what are the relevant theoretical discourses on civil military relations, especially in the context of Bangladesh? what were the major phases and evolution of civil military relations in Bangladesh? how did the social composition influence civil military relations? what are the levels of institutionalization of military and civilian political procedures? what were the levels of exerting pressure on government by military for more budgetary allocations? how did the political orientation of military, group politics and factionalism hamper balanced civil military relations? how does a balanced civil-military relations help to consolidate a vibrant democracy in Bangladesh?

The study has developed three main hypotheses. The firstly, it states that a polarised political spectrum and personal animosity between the leaders of the two main party blocks create political instability and provide military a platform to intervene in politics. The main contention behind this hypothesis lies in explaining BNP-Awami League politics and their development priorities. Most of the studies assumed that each ruling regimes in Bangladesh failed to vindicate any flagship welfare programmes and schemes for the commoners in the country. Everything has

political color and a totally politicized regime never brings out anything good for the society. Therefore, military in Bangladesh has become a tool to use by political parties and sometimes, military intervenes into politics. Secondly, it is hypothesized that the enormous pressure on various governments by military for more budgetary allocation and army's growing business interest have an adverse impact on the wider society and army itself. The military what was there in Bangladesh in 1971 had moved to a new position now. The enormous numbers of pressure groups related with army have been pressuring the government to initiate policies and fund infavour of them. Such changes must be studied carefully and civil military equation or civilian supremacy of military could be suggested here. Thirdly, an alternation of military and military-dominated civilian regimes has direct bearing on civil military relations and affects the consolidating process of democracy in Bangladesh. While testing the third hypothesis, it is necessary to know the level of vulnerability of Bangladesh political system to military intervention.

The study carries out a detailed research by employing the historical, descriptive and analytical framework with qualitative and quantitative method based on available primary and secondary resources. The civil- military relation would be described by applying an analytical and descriptive approach that identifies the changing nature of civil society and military according to the varying political regimes and its relation to state. More explorations of the study are done by applying deductive approach. The primary sources include official documents, reports etc., and the secondary sources collected from books, articles from academic journals, news-papers and Internet materials. The other sources of information included published research reports, Government of Bangladesh gazettes on civil organizations, unpublished reports from reputable organizations. The data for the proposed study have taken from major institutions such as BIIS, and several other international non-governmental organizations operating in the country. The study has also included the details of field trip to Bangladesh and interviews of professionals, academicians, military personnel's, politicians, journalists, researchers, students etc.

The first chapter, *Introduction*, give a detailed introduction about the genesis of the study. While discoursing about civil military relations, the general assumption relies on civilian supremacy over military to make the state system more stable and peaceful. But here in the context of Bangladesh, one could incite examples of military's involvement to stabilize the destabilized political system. So, one can state that civil military relations is a two way process where civilian control of military is highly needed and recommended and military support to the civilian governments would be highly preferred. This chapter basically intends to examine the studies on civil military relations, especially in the context of Bangladesh, research gaps in those studies and at last, it developed some research questions and hypotheses to direct this study to the right point.

The second chapter "*Civil Military Relations: A Theoretical Framework*" examines critical understanding of major theories with regard to civil military relations across the globe. This chapter explains the theoretical outline of civil military relations in Bangladesh could able to reveal new insights and explorations on the subject. It starts with the history of studies and academic engagements on civil military relations and going through various academically much acclaimed theories, debates and discourses on CMR. Most of the theorists suggest to develop an ideal format and legal framework to maintain civilian supremacy or control over military as it possess or uses something which are not with the common man. But Marxist-Leninist understanding on army could invigilate to re-open and re look at the history of civil military relations in third world, developing and least developed countries. Being a developing country, this study has used Marxist Leninist understanding on army to the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a country with Muslim majority but politically and legally Bangladesh appears secular and socialist. Therefore, the basic objective of this section is to look at various theoretical understandings to make this research enlightened.

The third chapter, *Developments of Political System in Bangladesh: 1971-2013*, elucidates the political developments and nature of party system in Bangladesh. The core intention of this chapter is to reveal the political background of Bangladesh before explaining civil military relations. It examines that even after decades of its formulation, Bangladesh failed to run based on its own constitution, failed to deliver a strong foreign policy and still struggling to execute its



planning policies and programmes. The chapter stresses the fact that the fragile nature of Bangladesh state was the result of lack of coordination of its three branches of the state. This section clearly demarcates each periods of political developments in Bangladesh. The chapter finds that Bangladesh has been running through turbulent situations and all these political scuffle and skirmishes would have been the outcome of improper institutionalisation of state's organs.

The fourth chapter, *The History and Evolution of Civil Military Relations*, highlights the evolutionary stages of civil military relations in Bangladesh and it reveals that the military has been an integral part of Bangladeshi politics since the beginning. This nexus were formed at the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 when the civilian population and Mukti Bahini collectively worked against the military domination erstwhile WestPakistan. This chapter points out the fact that the historical clubbing of civil military relations in Bangladesh has two sides; positive and negative. Unfortunately, Bangladesh has become a country which suffers a lot from the complexities in civil military relations. Just after Independence, Mujibur Rahman turned authoritarian and introduced one party system at the end of his tenure. From August 1975 to December 1990, Bangladesh remained under military administration. From 1991, Bangladesh has been experimenting democracy and wider political role for the military is also visible. Eventually, the military leaders expanded their horizon beyond the barracks and obtained an effective control mechanism over all political and non-military organisations. It has also seen the consistent increase in defence allocation by civilian governments ensured the continued support of the armed forces. So, civil military relations in Bangladesh are running through different phases. The chapter is an attempt to take all those historical glimpses of civil military relations in Bangladesh from pre independence period to 2013.

The fifth chapter, *Domestic Political Situations and Civil Military Relations*, attempts to points out several features which are affecting Civil-Military relations in Bangladeshi. The political experiences of the county reveal that factionalism and politicization are two major factors which constantly drag civil military relations into a bad swing and it has adverse impacts on Bangladesh's developmental agenda too. It shows how they adversely affected and hampered the institutionalization of civil-military relations. It throws light on the fact that the political power holders and excessive role of military personnel in politics aggravated the army's structural instability. The chapter argues that during the 1980 military rule, the military's professionalism,

discipline and the institutionalization of the armed forces' role were promoted and encouraged the main thesis points to the return of civilians to power in 1991. At the same time, the same period reintroduced partisan politics and cleavages into the army and threatened the stability of civil-military relations. Whatever be the form of government were in power, the history of civil military relations in Bangladesh reveal that there was no serious follow up and executive steps to democratize the civil military relations.

The sixth chapter, *Changing Civil Military Relations: Civil Society Perspectives* identifies the relevance of historical concoction of political or civilian and military elements in the pre independent struggle for freedom and the intervention of civilian and military wings into the realms of both. It tries to elucidate the historical and post independent nature of civil military relations by applying Marxist Leninist Analysis of army and civil military relations. As an expansion of the same theoretical tool, the study developed three stages of civil military relations. But the crux of this study relies on while explaining the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh through a new trajectory of four phases: Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced. At the end of this chapter, observations and responses of academicians, research scholars, retired military personnel's and students have been added to test whether the outcome of this study through above mentioned four stages could be replicated or not in the context of Bangladesh.

The chapter, *Conclusion*, highlights some of the major shifts and changes happened in the sweet and sour relations of civil military in Bangladesh. From 1971 to 2012, the study has identified 9 politicaldifferent phases in civil military relations. The study proved that either undemocratic civilian or military intervention into the ruling mechanism can be resulted in chaos and destabilize the system as a whole. It stresses the level of politicization of civil society and military was high and intense in Bangladesh throughout all these years. During 2007-2008, Bangladesh experienced the good sides of balanced civil military relations. Army even had opportunities to take the control of the country but it maintained decorum and followed constitutional and democratic provisions. It given full support to caretaker government to balance the equilibrium and conducted a fair election. Though alternate political parties have been manipulating the army's hierarchy and distorting its prestige while re-awakening its political factions, the military actually showed its commitment towards democratic principles

and its eagerness to engage in commercial enterprises. It is clear that civil military relations require well established democratic base and the way government works should not be based on any undemocratic ideological inclinations. The chapter suggests civilian system must be totally responsive to the needs and demands of people and military must be apolitical. Moreover, in order to create balance in civil military relations, people should have deliberate participation in democracy which eventually makes both civilian and military system to be sincere and responsive.

## **Chapter II**

### **Civil Military Relations: A Theoretical Exploration**

## **Chapter II**

### **Civil Military Relations: A Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.1 Prelude**

The second chapter Civil Military Relations: A Theoretical Exploration wages a critical understanding of major theories with regard to civil military relations across the globe. This section requires to justify the core questions of the study for a theoretical outline of civil military relations in Bangladesh could able to reveal new insights and explorations on the subject. It starts with the history of studies and academic engagements on civil military relations and going through various academically much acclaimed theories, debates and discourses on CMR. Most of the theorists suggest to develop an ideal format and legal framework to maintain civilian supremacy or control over military as it possess or uses something which are not with the common man. But Marxist-Leninist understanding on army could invigilate to re-open and re look at the history of civil military relations in third world, developing and least developed countries. Being a developing country, this study has used Marxist Leninist understanding on army to the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a country with Muslim majority but politically and legally Bangladesh appears secular and socialist. Basically, the working principles of state and demographic nature of the state are contradictory. Such contradictions can be visible in all aspects of Bangladeshi society. Civil Military relation would not be an exception and such astonishing contradictions have far reaching consequences on civil military relations in Bangladesh. So, the basic objective of this section is to look at various theoretical understandings to make this research enlightened.

The history of civil-military relations can be seen and traced to the works of many eminent scholars. Early scholar's of this aspects including Tzu, Clausewitz etc. emphasized that the army's duty is to serve the people and the nation as a whole and the army is primarily the utmost servant of the nation. Civil-military relations elucidate the fact that the bond between civilian system including the commoners as a whole and the army departments and other segments are established to protect the society and the nation as whole. But if one narrow down the definition of CMR, it clears the strong bond between the civilian system or elected representatives of people of a given society and state and its army. Much of academic researches on civil-military

relations normally explain CMR on the basis of its normative assumption that is clearly state that civilian control, constant check and superiority over military is highly preferable to make clear the fact that state runs on straight path. The crucial and relevant point CMR researchers always examine is its empirical credibility that keenly focuses how a vigilant and superior civilian authorities control over the army is technically and legally established and smoothly maintained.

## **2.2 Major Theoretical Discourses on Civil-Military Relations**

The concept of civil military relations was more debated and analyzed across the globe particularly taking the case of USA. The prominent role of the United States in the World War and Cold War politics and economy had given America a huge space in the international scene. Though Soviet Union was also active, still America occupied and considered as better example with respect to the studies and analysis of civil military relations. Its foreign policy, domestic policy and bilateral and multilateral relations have undergone tremendous changes during these periods. It has positive and negative impacts on their civil military relations too. The intellectual discourses on civil military relations by taking the instance of USA had got more prominence once Samuel P Huntington published his seminal book on civil military relations. Theoreticians including Huntington suggested to develop professionalism in military while dealing with their duties and complete obedience of military towards civilian system. Many arguments have emerged from different corners of the world and many schools of thought had been established. The session below examine some of the major theories related with civil military relations and analyze the nature of civil military relations in the context of Bangladesh. The main debate revolve around two aspects: civilian and military aspects and most of them focused to define borders of both civil military arena. But the main argument was on a question to decide how better civil military relations can maintain without killing the prospects of liberal democracy (Hossain 1991).

## **2.3 Institutional Theory**

In his book on civil-military relations, *The Soldier and the State*, Samuel P. Huntington elucidates the conflicts between the two varying aspects as a clash between the norms, values, perceptions and views kept by army personnel and also the attitude and views kept by civilian system. Basically, one could cite it as a clash or contrast between conservatives and liberals where liberals always have the popular support (Huntington 1957). It is clear that the army's functions

and duties are entirely different from civilian world. The army is inherently occupied important place in the state system but it should be kept under the domain control of civilian system. At the same time, there were occasions where military occupies or tries to gain supreme position over civilian system. So it would be preferable to create legal framework and vindicate it to maintain the dominance of civilian system over military. What Huntington thought of to solve this acute political and technical problem is professionalism; professionalism of military and control over military. In his study of officer corps, he recommends to develop professional attitude of military and its loyalty towards civilian system. He understood the fact that though academicians call officers as professionals, but actually they are professionals, they are not entitled to known as professionals but tradesmen or skilled craftsmen (Huntington 1957: 127).

Huntington keenly focused on four aspects of the army as an institution: discipline, structure, order, and self-sacrifice. The relevance of four aspects could be compared with the actions of the army in history and its future prospects. Why he stresses on army's professional character could be its possession of power. But to Huntington both the army and its power are the deliberate creation of people and their representatives. Therefore, a constant vigilant and deliberate control over the army is necessary and never be loosened. And again, Huntington's professionalism of the army could be explained in another ways. It is assumed that civilian interference on army can be avoided. If the army's resources and other power bas are being used by civilian leaders to take revenge on their political opponents, then the question of professionalism from civilian part is problematic. So, professionalism of army and civilian system should be balanced and maintained to develop better civil military relations. Why it is necessary to maintain balanced civil military relations, why one should not take one over other, answer are simple and it is needed and relevant sustain democracy (Huntington 1957: 223).

What military is supposed to maintain is strict adherence and obedience to the civilian system. At the same time, it is the responsibility of civilian system to define the objectives of any military actions. It is also relevant to keep in mind that once the motives or objectives of any military action is being defined, let it give to the military officers to decide what could be the possible way to achieve their aims or motives. If there finds excessive control and intervention on army by the civilian system, there are the possibilities of backlashes and clashes between both segments of the state (Huntington 1957: 249). The problem always counter the civilian system is deciding its

dividing lines on where to start and where to pause. If the amount of control over military is too much, it could result in dissatisfaction of army personnels and could break their morale. If the control is too low, it also could result in the military intervention in politics or militarized political system. Therefore, Huntington's dictum on CMR stands for the better management of military by better civilian system.

Objective civilian control was the answer put forwarded by Huntington to solve or sort out these impending issues in civil military relations. On the question of excessive civilian control over military, there would be serious repercussions on military and its efficiency. As per his objective civilian control, the direction from civilian system to the military would be intrusive and detailed. There would be more military interests and the military has all the privileged rights to decide on security issues within the country but under the strong framework of civilian system. He was also posed questions on effectiveness of civilian system as it is incredibly needed to control and make military very effective and responsive towards the society. In order to sort out these issues, Huntington put forwarded two aspects to shape the imperatives of civilian control over the military: functional and societal (Huntington 1957: 171). Again in order to understand the crux of these aspects, he has divided the societal imperatives into two: ideology and structure. By elucidating the term ideology, Huntington means a liberal anti-military, conservative pro-military, fascist pro-military and Marxist anti-military. But by explaining structure he demarcates the legal-constitutional framework which is highly and importantly needed to guide the political affairs and civil-military affairs (Huntington 1957: 172).

The much debated theory of Huntington clarified each and every aspect of civil military relations which lay genuine and creative foundation for democracy. By quoting incidences from American political system and civil military relations, he adds that the above mentioned ideological and structural segments of his theory are unchanging in the United States. If it is going in that way, the role of functional imperative would be totally descriptive for varying changes and differences in civilian control and it will have impacts on the military security aspects. To be precise, it is understood that if the external threats are very less in numbers, then the role of army in intervening into each and every segments of state's life would be minimal and less. At the same time, if the threats from inside and outside are high, then there would be the presence of military everywhere and it gives relevant role to sort out any issues. Huntington also



points out the transmutation effect of military at the time of external threats. He suggests that though the threats are high, military has to go hand in hand with the principles of liberalism and democracy. This transmutation effect will be active for short periods, for example engages in a war, but will not assure military security (Huntington 1957: 261).

## **2.4 Convergence Theory**

One of the other major theoretical debates generated in the realm of political science, international relations and security studies was by Morris Janowitz in the year 1960 by publishing his book *The Professional Soldier* (Janowitz 1960). He introduced a dictum which was almost equal to what Huntington suggested. There are clear cut differences between civilian system and military. Both must be operated and vindicated with the provisions mentioned in the liberal democratic norms. Janowitz considered the fact that there should be attempts to clear all the dangers create both civilian and military system on democracy. Both segments of governance have to maintain professionalism and they should strictly adhere to the laws of the land. Janowitz introduced a theory of convergence in which he stresses the fact that the army doesn't need any external threats to be active in the society and state. There are plethoras of other reasons which are being driven by military to occupy a crucial role in the system. This theory pointed out two different aspect of civilian system: civilianization of the military and militarization of society. He adds that why it is being called military for it has its own strategic and inherent features rather than civilian system which are the direct reflection of society. Janowitz realizes that there would be maximum possibilities for clashes between civilian world and military world as both has its own peculiar nature and established interests. At the same time, the author agrees that there should be clear cut and established legal framework to make civilian control over the military. So, by introducing Convergence theory, what Janowitz means is the role of military in understanding its responsibility towards society (Janowitz 1960: 13).

How one can make it sure that military should be the direct reflection of society too. The social composition of military can be another relevant aspect in convergence theory. If the social representation of the army is direct and clear, then there would be high level of social responsibility can be visualized among army personnel. The more societal reflection in army gives the more social responsibilities. It eventually develops a sense of respect and obedience towards the civilian system. What Huntington developed is a dictum to control the military by

civilian system but what Janowitz created is to develop a sense of norms within army personnel to respond to society sensibly. This convergence theory helped the policy makers to diminish the existing difference.

## **2.5 Institutional and Occupational Hypothesis**

Charles Moskos introduced Institutional parameter to study about the military organization and military change by relooking at the comparative aspects and changes which happened in the studies of civil military relations for the few decades (Moskos 1977). By introducing this new theory, Moskos helped the area to understand and measure the level of civil military relations across the globe since the cold war. It stresses the fact that the army was going away from its institutional nature and these days, it has been showing a kind of occupational character. At the institutional level, one could only observe the institutional features and obligations of military, but if one looks at the military on the basis of occupational nature, there would be more social reflection within army visible. Therefore, the periods of seeing military as just institution is over, these days, military has been performing several societal functions too. Such understanding would enrich the studies on civil military relations across the globe (Moskos 1977: 129).

## **2.6 Agency Theory**

Peater D. Feaver came up with another hypothesis on civil military relations which is world widely known as Agency theory. He openly rejected Huntington's theory of civilian control over the military (Feaver 2004). By taking the principles and ideas of micro economics, Feaver explains how the personnel in superior position try to influence those in a subordinate role. In order to explain this analysis, he adds two concepts: working and shirking. As he followed conventional understanding of democracy in civil military relations, he stresses that the principal agent of policy making is civilian leaders and what the military has to do is implement it. Here, he introduced the army or military as an agent of the civilian system to carry out and vindicate the policies and programmes initiated by civilian system. At the same time, military may shirk means it goes beyond the control of civilian system to achieve its own established interests.

The most important question is how to make it sure that agent will obey the principal. The theory predicts that if the amount of control that principal uses on agent is low, then there would be high possibility of breaching the framework by agent. If the level of principal's control over the agent

is high and well established, then there would be strict obedience by agent towards the principal. If agent is responding well, principal resorts to intrusive method to regain the control over agent. Such intrusive methods can be many including inspections, reports, reviews of military plans, and detailed control of the budget, and for Congress, committee oversight hearings and requiring routine reports (Feaver 2004: 261). To be precise, military should not be shirked from its assigned duties as it is one of the prime agents of the state like civilian system. Whatever be the actions carried out, the agent has come under and work in accordance with the laws of the civilian system.

Feaver stated his theory of agency was different from all his predecessors as it was mainly deductive and highly established on the basis of the principles of democracy and liberalism rather than on factual evidence and it could help better the present day to day affairs of the states while dealing civil military relations. It can be looked as mixture of both Huntington's institutional and Janowitz' theories. As stated above, Huntington keenly explains the bond between civilian system and the military. At the same time, Janowitz emphasizes the bond of the military and society. In short what agency theory substantiates is the link between both Huntington and Janowitz understanding of civil military relations (Rabindranath 2016: 15).

## **2.7 Concordance Theory**

Another formulation on civil military relation has been propounded by Rebecca L. Schiff offered and it is known as Concordance. Author states that after seeing the bond and nature of civil military relations across the globe, there should be clear cut difference between civilian system and military. Civilian system must develop a framework to deal with the military segment of the state. As the civilian and military aspects different physically and ideologically, we need to have different framework to maintain the relations (Schiff 2009). The author introduced this theory as an alternative to other major theories on civil military relations. It stresses on the question that whether military needs to intervene in civilian system and politics. If yes, under what circumstances and conditions military can do that. It never gives any preference to the military to intervene in domestic politics but carried out an enquiry to know the situations and circumstances which prompted the military to go into politics.

Basically, there are not that much differences between civilian system and military as both reflect the society as a whole. Therefore, it does not demand division between the civilian and military segment. Following the developments and explanations, the writer explained that there are three societal institutions: including the army, governing political and civilian elites and cooperative arrangement of citizens (Schiff 2009: 19). The theory states that given below are the three major societal compositions of the military segments of the state: the political decision-making process, the method of recruiting military personnel and the style of the military. Therefore, social representations of both army and the civilian system equally valid, so where are the differences. It makes clear that zero level difference could make the civil military relations ratio, equation and cooperation more stable.

The author argues that the above mentioned three parameters are happening without any delay with respect to the four indicators, then there is less chance of military intervention in domestic politics. In the work, *The Military and Domestic Politics*, the author make her understanding clear by introducing and presenting six case studies: U.S., post-Second World War period, American Post-Revolutionary Period (1790-1800), Israel (1980-90), Argentina (1945-55), India post-Independence and 1980s, Pakistan (1958-69). The author was very much confused by portraying these cases asking the major theoreticians that whether most of the debates on CMR are based on to know that the gap between civilian and military<sup>6</sup> is necessary or not. She poses that whether the separation between civilian system and the military was inevitable and likely necessary. These arguments, debates and discourses had been there in mainstream for a long time but questions on whether to control the gap between the two or to minimize the gap still remains prior concern for all policy makers (Schiff 2009: 291).

## **2.8 The Culture Gap Thesis**

Alfred Vagts tried to look at this issue from an historical point of view emphasizing on the cases and experiences from German military stories (Vagts 1937). Before going into details, the author describes militarism as the state of a society that ranks military institutions and ways above the prevailing attitudes of civilian life and carries the military mentality into the civilian sphere. Another scholar, Louis Smith, emphasized the emerging issues and problems of constitutional and judicial control. These controls are there to control the military and the author suggests executive civilian control over military to make it sure that military won't cross any lines (Smith

1951). All these outcomes derived off the discussions come from American experience which had a strong influence there in the cold war and post-cold war politics. How can we expect that the same influence can be reached out to the civil military relations in other countries which were not even touched by cold war. It was evident in the case of U.S.A that they could able to maintain strong control over military at any point of their turbulated political history. The civilian military relations in USA often considered as high level and it is capable of developing a stable and balanced civil military relations. It had happened because of the high political culture that people maintained throughout the years. But will anyone expect the same situations in all other countries. So there should be control over military if military run beyond the founding principles of state and democracy.

During the first few years of civil military relations, there were scholars demanded for the strict control of civilian system over military. They were demanding for civilian supremacy over military. This period started from the end of world war second and ended in 1973. The main concern of scholars of civil military relations of this time was to define civil-military relations. It also carried out with other concepts such as subjective objective control, professionalism and possible ways and means to control the military by the civilians (Abdul 2010: 19). The second period begun from 1973, was noted several relevant incidences in the history of civil military relations and continued till the end of Cold War. Scholars of these periods mentioned the Vietnam War and how the volunteer force changed the nature of the armed forces. Scholars also led this discussion to interrogate into the fact that whether it helped the systems to widen or reduce the gap between civilian and military system. With the end of cold war, the next period started. During these periods, many scholars have interrogated into the relevance of maintaining gap between civil military. The concepts of bond, equation and cooperation between civil military have been raised in this period (Abdul 2010: 20).

Most of the scholars agreed the fact that a gap does exist, but at the same time, there is huge contempt by other section of scholars saying that whether the gap matters. But one thing noted during this stage was there weren't that much discussion posed on the question of sufficient and adequate laws and policies to sort out the issue. At the same time, there were group of scholars criticizing that the debates on civil military relations revolved around widening or minimizing the gap and the reasons for such reactions. It was also noted that the discussions on civil military

relations regarding the gap of control which started early in the 1950s continued till the 1990s. at the end of cold war, there were several peace treaties signed which might have introduced new lines in the studies of civil military relations. The relevant point here to note was that most of scholars tried to look at civil military relations beyond America (Rabindranath 2016: 481).

As per the views of the scholars, the gap dictum always exist and revolve around two aspects; notion of cultural gap and the notion of connectivity. The very first one elucidates the existing differences in the values, norms and culture of the two worlds; civilian system and military system. The second aspects define the lack of understanding, communication between military and civilian system. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the level of norms and values maintained by both world and it also relevant to enhance the communication channel between them. Many of the scholars stated that there isn't any difference between civilian and military segments so it should be cooperated and maintain civil military equation. But some scholars argued that there are inherent differences in the nature and working styles of civilian and military aspects. Therefore, a clear cut strategy has to develop to run both. Charles Maynes pointed out the fact that military mainly composed of personnel from lower socio-economic strata would not be fought for the interests of elite military heads (Maynes 1998). Scholars like Tarr and Roman stated that there are also the presences of military and civilian elites and they maintain their own strategic interests within their own realm. But cooperation between them would help them to politicize the whole system into a bad level. Ultimately, it will hamper an institutionalized civil militarized relation in any countries in the world (Tarr and Roman 1998). Chivers believed that the differences between these world is real but not that much big so it has to be irrelevant to carry on (Chivers 1999).

One of the major debates instigates each researcher to go beyond cultural or connectivity gap classification is the organizational nature of both civilian and military realm. The organizational nature of civilian system is strictly adhere to constitution of that particular land and even in the case of military, though there are some exceptions, it has to come under the realm of civilian system or laws of the land. Sometimes, scholars argue, military has been used by civilian system to go beyond the norms of society and eventually it hampers balanced civil military relations. The institutional character of both arena of civil military decides a particular line to behave. It helps both to maintain and control the population of each. Breaking the institutional

lines would invite more troubles and military's extra acts always supervised and judged. Therefore, institutional character or behavior of both civilian and military segments need to be understood and analyzed in parallel to cultural and connectivity gap.

In the long running of civil military relation in any forms of governance, the supreme or improved control over military by civilian system is necessary. In the case of cultural gap analysis, it matters if the military crosses its boundary and try to dominate civilian system. In order to develop an effective control over the military, even the civilian system has to strictly follow the constitutional laws of the land. But is also fact that the debate settled on without deciding whether the gap is too wide or not. If it is found that the cultural gap would be too wide, it does mean that it will hamper the civil military relations and may put the whole state system in trouble. It happens because of lack of communication and serious misunderstanding between two worlds: civilian and military system. But some scholars agree the fact that cultural gap in any systems to be expected and it is not dangerous. In many of the cases, studies found that low political culture or culture of political conservatism and also the partialized role of some military personnel infavour of some political persons are visible and such acts would kill the possibilities for better civil military relations (Chivers 1999: 32).

Understanding the fact that there is already gaps exist and there are the high needs to find solutions to it, many of the scholars came up with some interesting suggestions and recommendations. All these suggestions reflect an attempt to correct the problems arising out of it and aimed to narrow the gap. Here, we could cite some of major relevant suggestion as three: The first one state that the military should reach out to the realm of civilian system as the former destined to work under the latter. The second point clears that the civilian leaders must articulate its provisions, vision and mission to the military heads. In turn military has to give positive response to the civilian system (Chivers 1999). The final recommendation suggest that the most forbidden way to solve the gap issues between civil military is engaging in effective and practical ways and means to call for dialogue and proper communication and understanding. For that, bilateral education can be resorted and in which both the leaders of military and civilian system can be part of.

### **2.9 E. Finer's Framework on the Role of Military in Politics**

Samuel E. Finer work, *The Man on the Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics*, is one of the examples of the classical approach to the study of military relations. He developed a broad range of concepts designed to conceptualize, analyze and explain the relations between civil political leaders and military. It is a fundamental idea by Finer that there is a close relation between the political culture of a country and the means of power that the military can use towards the civil leaders. He distinguishes between four different types of societies that each makes it likely that certain means will be used by the military. In modern societies the military will most likely try to use official constitutional channels in order to gain influence. In developed societies it will use blackmail and intimidation. In societies with 'low political culture' it will try to change the civil leaders in order to serve its own means and in countries with minimal political culture it will rule itself (Finer 1962).

The primary means by which this happens is according to Finer through forms of action that are to some extent overlapping as it is indicated in the below overviews. There is a succession in these forms of actions that means that those related to societies where the civil leadership has full control over the state are at top while those most associated with societies where the military has the upper hand are below.



**Table 1**

**Samuel E. Finer's Ideas of Military Control**

Forms of Control	Mix of Means	Means
Influence	1 and 2	1 Constitutional Channels 2 Competition with Civil Authorities
Blackmail	2, 3 and 4	3 Intimidation of Civil Authorities 4 Threats of Stop for Cooperation and Violence against Civilians
Displacement	4, 5 and 6	5 Will not Defend Civil Authorities
Sapplantent	4, 5 and 6	6 Violence against Civil Authorities

*Source: E. Finer 1962*

As can be seen the two last categories are really the same seen as mixes of means, but they differ from those of Finer since he also distinguishes between cases where the military decides which civilians are to form government (displacement) and cases in which the military forms government by itself (supplantment).

**2.10 Marxist Leninist Understanding of Military and Civil Military Relations**

The Marxist Leninist discussions and theoretical molding on army and civil military relations analyse armed forces and its particular aspects of use and social role, as an instrument of war, as a means of deterrence, as a tool of international pressure and coercion or as a factor of internal structure and functioning of society. The Marxist Leninist theory of armed forces and its impacts on civil military relations considered as anchored in the theory of society, its structure, dynamics and functioning and in particular in the theory of the state: the nature of the state as a social institution, its structure and its internal and external policies (Lider 1981). This involves three corresponding components of the theory in question: the theory of the nature of armed forces as

an instrument of social action and of its impact on social development; the theory of structural relationship between armed forces and other elements of the social structure, in particular other organs of the state and; the concept of the functions of armed forces in the conduct of internal and external policy in peacetime as well as wartime.

Moreover, Marxist Leninist understanding on army and its impact on civil military relation could be categorized into role and functions of army in three set ups. In the late sixties, the two processes which in classical military theory had been inseparably connected were seemingly separated: the origin of the army and its subsequent role in the social development, i.e. following the national liberation. As to the former, the picture became more diversified and in some studies four kinds of new armies were pointed out: The armies inherited from the period when the countries in question were formally independent but remained under a strong colonial influence, Armies inherited from the colonial powers, Armies which emerged in the course of the national liberation struggle and Armies created after the independent states were created.

In countries with a socialist orientation, the leading social forces are called the forces of popular democracy and social liberation. They focus on the development of state industry, of agriculture co-operatives and the nationalisation of foreign firms. The struggle for a fully democratic army is given the greatest attention. The armies use the experience of the Soviet armed forces and often take advantage of their material support. In the capitalist-oriented countries, there is a mixture of capitalist development and the remnants of feudal system. Armed forces are the main instrument of internal reaction and imperialism against the mass movement striving towards national and social liberation. They participate in wars against other peoples, and thus appear as an instrument of United States' neo-colonial policy.

Some writers repeat the traditional assessment of all young national states as anti-imperialist and progressive. Others tend to generalise the fact that new reactionary coups keep occurring and regard this phenomenon as an intrinsic feature of post-liberation development in these countries. Still others, to avoid having to explain the constantly unexpected shifts in the role of the particular armies, present both contrary tendencies as increasing: there is a growing tendency to involve armies in the accomplishment of economic and social progressive transformations and on the other hand, the number of the counter revolutionary actions initiated by the reactionary military also increases. Marxist Leninist understanding on the role of military always gives a

space to military to intervene in the social and political system if the system is not running according to the calls of the people.

### **2.11 Marxist Leninist Analysis on Army and Civil Military Relations in the Context of Bangladesh**

The socio political character, functions and social role of the armed forces of the developing countries and of the young post-colonial countries which emerged from and after World War second is a new and rather complicate subject in the theory of civil military relations and military power. There is confusion concerning their nature, functions and classifications and the views change constantly. This confusion may be exemplified by the fact that the studies on the armies of young national states and armies of the liberated countries require a detailed understanding and explanation of the societies they originate. Such a construction means that the armies in question generally do not fit the traditional image of the capitalist armies, nor can they be included in the category of the socialist armies. Therefore, they constitute the third type of armed forces.

According to the Marxist-Leninist understanding, the social functions of any army are determined by its class character which depends on the nature of the class or class state whose instrument the army is. In many cases, this connection is difficult to establish. The difficulty begins with the analysis of the origin of the armies of the developing countries. The classical exposition is simple: one class deprives the other one of power and creates a new army for the promotion of its external and internal interests. In this way, feudal revolution created the feudal army and the capitalist army emerged from the bourgeoisie revolution. The proletariat revolution resulted in the creation of a proletarian army which has become a nationwide socialist one. The armies of the developing countries do not fit in this picture too.

Most of the developing countries have undergone revolutionary changes of a national and social character. They have acquired political independence and destroyed many of the feudal and colonial socio-economic relations. However, in several cases, neither the revolutionary transformations and nor the society which has emerged from them have had a clear cut class character. The democratic revolutions have been intermixed with the socialist transformations

and both have had in the background the national liberation from the colonial rule, which has also been viewed as a kind of revolutionary change.

Several of these societies were not classical societies consisting of the two main antagonistic classes, in other words, they did not fit the classical Marxist-Leninist typology of socio-economic formations. In particular they were not capitalistic societies in the traditional sense; there existed neither a strong industrial bourgeoisie nor a matured working class. On the contrary, the intermediate social strata—the trade bourgeoisie, officials and intelligentsia—played an increasing role in the economic and political life. These premises have continued to influence social development in the post-revolutionary period: neither bourgeoisie nor working class have suddenly become clearly shaped organisms with clearly defined class interests and with strong leaderships. This has begun a slow and gradual process of re-shaping the social structure and of crystalizing the main social forces.

In several under developed states, the armed forces have become almost independent social bodies and the only ones which are sufficiently organized to be able to take effective political action. The cadre of officers has achieved a strong position in the intelligentsia and has begun to play a significant role in the political life. In effect, the army has gained an unorthodox position: that of the possessor or one of the possessors of power and not merely in its instrument. It has become a subject of politics and not merely one of its means. Another peculiarity of the unorthodox position of armed forces was that the population has regarded army as symbol of sovereignty, as the body which makes a nation out of tribes, castes and other social groups, as the center of education and modern technology and often also as the bearer of modern socio-political ideas. These few peculiarities would be sufficient to raise certain problems for Marxist-Leninist theory which could not be easily explained by the orthodox teaching on army.

The ebullient first years of the national liberation movement saw the emergence of number of new states. This was presented as the great triumph of the Marxist Leninist theory which predicted such a development and which hoped to gain new allies in its world competition with imperialism. The general assessment of the new armies was positive. In the studies of the armies of the new countries, the Marxist – Leninist thinkers attempted to cope with the diversity of their socio-political character by applying various criteria. One was the way in which a particular army was created. Here a distinction was made between the armed forces which emerged in the

course of the national liberation struggle and those which were organized by the puppet regimes in countries which achieved independence without a prolonged armed struggle.

The first group was also a differentiated one. A distinction was made between the armies of those countries where the communist parties were the leading force in the national liberation struggle and those where they were aligned with other parties. Rebel armies born in some semi-colonial countries in the course of the struggle against both the puppet regimes and their allies, the colonialist armed forces, constituted a third sub group. The second group included armies either formed on the basis of the previous national units of the colonialist armed forces or new ones organized by the puppet regimes. And also these armed forces were regarded as having various socio-political characteristics dependent on the influence of the progressive social forces in the given country (Lider 1981).

The general idea underlying the evaluation of particular armies was simple: the greater the influence of communist parties, or at least of other progressive social forces, the more active was the role of the particular armies in social transformations, if the communist parties were the leading force, the national liberation revolution could be transformed into a socialist one. The external function was said to correspond to the internal role of the armies and was considered either peaceful and progressive or aggressive and reactionary. From the earlier years of the history of the young national states, the relation between the armies and social forces which were considered their leading force or even disponent was far from the classical simple picture of armies as an instrument of classes or class states. This could be said of both the progressive and the reactionary groups of armies. While in a few countries in the progressive groups the new army could be seen as a direct instrument of the victorious classes, fully subordinated to the communist leadership and contributing to the socialist transformations, in others they became self-dependent forces and afterwards played a reactionary role.

At the same time, while some armies of the reactionary regimes, either strengthened the rule of the bourgeoisie or even closely linked to the former colonialist powers or to the USA, others led by progressive officers overthrew the puppet regimes and initiated certain democratic transformations. The general picture was even more obscured by the fact that in several countries reactionary military coups overthrew the democratic governments. In order to explain such unexpected developments, some writers observed that the relationship between an army and the

class which is supposed to be its leading force is always complex and characterized by several intermediate links and it is dynamic, changing and different in various periods. While in the course of the national liberation struggle, the army is usually closely linked to society and reflects its national and social structure, i. e. it is directed by the same social forces which lead the struggling camp, in the liberated country it becomes an apparently autonomous part of the state apparatus and performs important non-military functions. Although it continues to represent definite class interests, it does so only in the final analysis. While in every day policy it behaves as a bureaucratic body governed by its own laws and resisting some direct orders from its disponent.

When the social structure clarifies, the state apparatus finally becomes an instrument of the governing class and armed forces are assigned to their normal position. For instance armies originally led by progressive classes will finally become again their instrument. The armies of the post-colonial states were often called-en bloc- armies of the young national countries and the principal difference between them and the capitalist armies was emphasized. It was a reflection of a global assessment of the new states which were regarded as inimical to the Western imperialist states and thus sometimes viewed as a vast zone of peace. The generally positive assessment was reflected in the term armies of the national liberation revolution. These are generally characterized as expressing the interests of the majority of the people as being the instrument of the state in the struggle against foreign and domestic reactionary forces and as promoting social progress. They perform two functions: internally they protect the revolutionary gains and externally they defend independence and national sovereignty against the imperialist states (Lider 1981).

In the late sixties the two processes which in classical military theory had been inseparably connected, were seemingly separated: the origin of the army and its subsequent role in the social development, i.e. following the national liberation. As to the former, the picture became more diversified and in some studies four kinds of new armies were pointed out:

- 1) The armies inherited from the period when the countries in question were formally independent but remained under a strong colonial influence.
- 2) Armies inherited from the colonial powers.
- 3) Armies which emerged in the course of the national liberation struggle.

4) Armies created after the independent states were created.

Such a classification ignored the social political forces which created the armies or led them in their struggle. As to the role of armies in social development, several studies painted a black and white picture. This reflected the set-backs in some countries: the radical and pro-Soviet regimes gave way to military leaderships which abandoned that policy. The changes became so numerous and so rapid that Soviet writers, apparently tiring of the constant change in the character of the armies from progressive to reactionary and occasionally in the contrary direction, made a general sketch consisting of two extremes and resembling the traditional scheme. Thus, armed forces of the post-colonial states were divided into two categories: reactionary and progressive. The armies of most Latin American and some African countries, for instance, were described as the foreign legions of the Western powers, as instruments of imperialism used for the suppression of the national liberation movement in their own and neighbouring countries (Lider 1981).

It was stressed that the struggle between reactionary and progressive forces also occurred within particular armies and that the victory of one of the adversaries determined the role of the army in the domestic evolution: several armies contributed to establishing reactionary regimes supported by the imperialist states, others held up the development of their countries along the socialist path and saved them from being plundered by foreign monopolies. This assessment has become a formal two item classification. The armed forces of the liberated, or post-colonial, countries are divided into two main groups: the armies of the liberated countries of the so-called socialist orientation, and those of the capitalist orientation. The armies of Algeria, Burma, Guinea, Iraq, Yemen, Congo, and Ethiopia are mentioned as examples of the former group, while most Latin American and several Asian armies are included in the latter.

In countries with a socialist orientation, the leading social forces are called the forces of popular democracy and social liberation. They focus on the development of state industry, of agriculture co-operatives and the nationalisation of foreign firms. The struggle for a fully democratic army is given the greatest attention. The armies use the experience of the Soviet armed forces and often take advantage of their material support. In the capitalist-oriented countries, there is a mixture of capitalist development and the remnants of feudal system. Armed forces are the main instrument of internal reaction and imperialism against the mass movement striving towards national and

social liberation. They participate in wars against other peoples, and thus appear as an instrument of United States' neo-colonial policy.

This classification of armies reflects the view that the developing countries do not represent a new type of socio-economic and political system with its own path of development. It has been stated that in a world which is divided between two opposing systems and which is in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism no third path of social development is possible. No third world alongside the capitalist world and the socialist world exists. Each country in what has been called the Third World must make its choice between capitalism and in fact the overwhelming majority have done so. Among developing countries, states which are following the capitalist path and states which have chosen the socialist orientation are already coming together. Simultaneously there can and will be a gradual erosion of their commonalty as a result of some developing countries associating with the world socialist system while others join the group of the developed capitalist countries.

Some writers repeat the traditional assessment of all young national states as anti-imperialist and progressive. Others tend to generalise the fact that new reactionary coups keep occurring and regard this phenomenon as an intrinsic feature of post-liberation development in these countries. Still others, to avoid having to explain the constantly unexpected shifts in the role of the particular armies, present both contrary tendencies as increasing: there is a growing tendency to involve armies in the accomplishment of economic and social progressive transformations and on the other hand, the number of the counter revolutionary actions initiated by the reactionary military also increases (Lider 1981).

## **2.12 Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh is a state where one could try and test all the theories of civil military relations. But question remains are which one would be most suitable one. Though there are number of studies have done on the concept of civil military relations, its balance and imbalance between each other, role of civil society in state formation and controlling military, role of military to restore democracy in Bangladesh, a comprehensive study has not done yet on the question of how politicized military and politicized civil society together played an undisputable role in degrading Bangladesh as a turbulent political system and role of a balanced civil-military relations in



making it a democratically balanced state. The unholy nexus of politicized civil society and military had worked effectively for political and personal purposes during Mujib, Zia and Ershad years.

The post 1991 years were also witnessed several incidents includes political orientation of military, impact of group conflicts, factionalism and shifting political loyalties on civil society and military. The military takeover of political power indicated the vulnerability of Bangladesh political system. At the same time, the attempts and role of civil society and military in restoring democracy and constitutional rule through caretaker government should not be ignored. To be precise, the focus of this study is to analyze the history, pattern and growth process of civil-military relations in Bangladesh from 1971 to 2012.

Civil-Military Relations very much depends on day-to-day interactions between political leadership and military leadership. But some incidents in the short history of Bangladesh mirrored the course of sweet-sour relation between them. For examples, i) Bangladesh Liberation war of 1971, ii) Military coup in 1975 August, iii) Killings on the 3rd November and the 7th November 1975 up-rise in cantonments, iv) Ershad's military coup in 1982 without bloodshed, v) A brief military disorder in 1996, vi) Proxy role-play of the military together with previous care taker government 2007-2008, vii) BDR mutiny in 2009 and viii) A failed military coup in December, 2011 (Halim 2016). In this context, a detailed analysis would be necessary to bring out the real nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh since 1971. A historical understanding of Bangladesh military, which inherited from Punjabi dominated military bureaucracy, would also help this study to identify the changes in military structure that introduced after independence. In order to make this study more genuine and relevant, it is understood that need to study the role of leadership and prominence of military rule in Bangladesh. The level of politicization of civil society and military was high and intense in Bangladesh. So an attempt will be made to understand the nature of civil society and military during various political regimes.

While analysing civil-military relations in Bangladesh, two very important statements are noteworthy. First, in 1991, the newly elected Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, after resolving the debate over presidential vis-a-vis parliamentary system in bipartisan manner, stated that the

Jatiya Sangshad was a symbol of the nation's collective wisdom, and it would take a hot-headed general to drive his tanks through that House (Talukdar Maniruzzaman 1992).

Such was the prevalent euphoria in the country about the future of democracy and the consequent prospect of a healthy civil-military relation. Khaleda Zia's statement signified a turning point in Bangladesh's civil-military relations in the context of military's interventions in politics for more than a decade, despite constitutional provision (Article 103) and the Army Act (Articles 292 and 293) (Halim 2016). It was justifiably assumed that with the deepening of democracy classical civil-military relations -- i.e. civilian control of military, which lies at the very heart of any functional democracy-- would be established. Crafting a functional democracy was the litmus test for the political leaders of Bangladesh.

Regrettably, even after nearly twenty years of a democratic order, the military's potential intervention in politics still looms large in the horizon as indicated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent statement while explaining the reason for the abolition of the caretaker government (CTG) (Schendel 2009). Although her decision to abolish the system of CTG has been politically motivated, she tried to convince the opposition of her view that the possibility of military intervention through CTG -- like in 2007. However, her statement encapsulated the ominous fact that Bangladesh Army is a significant factor in Bangladesh politics. Why has Bangladesh not been able to establish a classical civil-military relation? Why, after so many years of democracy, are we still living under the shadow of the military?

Tragically, the principle reason lies in the nature of politics, which is characterized by deadly confrontations, revenge, and struggle for power by the two major political parties, giving rise to a dysfunctional democratic order with an abysmal record of institution building (Schendel 2009). This is equally applicable when it comes to institutionalizing a classical civil-military relation. It is a gargantuan task, especially in countries where the military, even after quitting state power, are reluctant to give up their residual powers, exercise power from behind the scene and look for opportunities to seize power again. Problems are exacerbated if the party-systems are fraught with myriad difficulties like lack of consensus, mutual trust, and overt quest for power (Schendel 2009). As such, the leadership of these countries must muster all their wisdom and ingenuity to deepen democracy and, to begin with, try to get rid of army's residual powers.

The leadership has fallen short of demonstrating political acumen. Due to mutual antagonism successive regimes, despite some positive developments like chalking out peacetime role for the military, setting up of military academies and schools to inculcate professionalism, establishment of channels and institutions ensuring regular communications between civil-military leaders, strengthening of Parliamentary Committees and improving relations between media and ISPR, wanted to keep the armed forces on their respective sides due to a widely accepted perception that to win the elections they need the tacit support of the army (Rabindranath 2010). This ominous fact has, recently, been highlighted by AL general secretary's recent statement that all previous CTGs were military governments. As a result, both leaders, when in power, allegedly try to please the army. Both have reiterated that they would build a modern army, though there is no clear-cut defense policy.

Parties in power have also, instead of formulating the right policies, especially a comprehensive defense policy, and creating a vibrant defence ministry through which the military would be subordinated to civilian leaders and society at large, tried to control the army via dual command. Holding of the defense ministry portfolio by the prime minister herself, creation of ad-hoc headquarters, bifurcation of the defense ministry and placement of the Armed Forces Division under the prime minister, have blocked the traditional command channel under which the chiefs of three services operate. Files for the president's approval are processed, signifying that the prime minister wants to deal with important military matters herself, in other words, exercise control through her trusted P.S.O. who advises her on military matters, and processes files for the president's approval. These developments, as well as their attempts to win over the military, have accelerated the politicization of the institution (Ahmed 2004).

As a result, successive regimes have either failed, or are not willing, to eliminate the military's residual powers, which should have been the first step towards the desired goal. Military budgets are still nontransparent and unaccountable. There is no explanation why the budget has tripled in the last eleven years. A tendency to appoint retired or on lien army officials in civil administration also demonstrate the military's clout in politics. The points above clearly show why Bangladesh's democratic political order is still vulnerable to military intervention (Halim 2004).

It should be understood that military intervention in politics cannot be prevented through a constitutional bar. Whereas rooting democracy firmly, steady economic growth, and sound law and order situation can keep the military away from mainstream politics. What is then the fundamental duty of our political leadership? The politicians must fully adhere to their commitment to democracy, try to come to a sort of agreement like the Charter of Democracy, signed by late Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif before Pakistan's 2007 parliamentary elections, and stop their alleged activities to try to involve the military in their partisan battles. It is the legal and moral responsibility to save the nation from that grim possibility. From all these above mentioned theoretical discourse on civil military relations and the analysis of past and present civil military relations in Bangladesh, the proposed study intends to understand the growth process and distortion of civil military relation in Bangladesh, which has not been done so far.

### **2.13 Conclusion**

In conclusion, one can state that theoretical discourses on civil military relations would enrich the understanding and always leave more areas to explore. It directs any country wise studies on civil military relation into the right path. This chapter mentioned number major theories on civil military relations based on experiences across the world. After analyzing, the study found that Marxist Leninist Analysis on armies and its impacts on civil military relations in newly formed countries could apply in the context of Bangladesh. As an expansion of Marxist Leninist Analysis, the study identify there relevant stages in civil military relation particularly in newly formed countries and countries which sought freedom from their colonial or neocolonial master based on language, religion, ethnicity etc. The role progressive force or people's army in mobilizing people against their colonial, imperial or neo colonial masters with the support of civilian or political leaders, socio-economic and political role of army and civilian system after independence and the role of army in stabilizing the destabilized civilian system are the three relevant stages in civil military relations of a country. The attempt to apply this theory in the context of Bangladesh has been made in the thesis and found successful in the context of Bangladesh. In continuation with such analysis, the study in the following chapters developed four stages of phases of civil military relations in Bangladesh: Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced. Based on the political developments, phases and imbalance between civil and military, the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh has been categorized. The basic

intention of this is to give an introduction to major theories on civil military and spread out the limitations in explaining peculiar cases.

## **Chapter III**

### **Developments of Political System in Bangladesh: 1971-2013**

## Chapter III

### Developments of Political System in Bangladesh: 1971-2013

#### 3.1 Prelude

Since the formation of Bangladesh as an independent nation, it has been coping up with several political, legal, developmental, cultural challenges. Before stating and interrogating more into the nature of political system in Bangladesh, the actual limitations of Bangladesh as a nation should be studied and well understood. The history shows that the Bangladesh has not reached political stability but it is more important to understand that Bangladesh as a fragile state till 2007 and as a failure state in providing basic amenities to its own people. Compared with other South Asian states, Bangladesh lags behind in literacy rate, health of men, women and children, development of infrastructure, developing skilled population, generating employment opportunities, foreign remittance, income from tourism etc. It would not be exaggerated if one state's that Bangladesh is struggling for the last 4 decades in generating revenue to run the state and the same situations will be continued for other 10 years.

Anthony Giddens categorizes the life of a state in three different stages. Considering the journey of a state since its inception, Giddens mentions that a state has to go through three different stages-1) Organic, 2) Developmental and 3) Critical (Giddens 1991). Organic stage starts with the formation of a state in which state has to coordinate, consolidate and vindicate its organs, resources and plans. It is the stage where state would use its maximum power to reorganise its boundaries, consolidate its resources and plans for future will be initiated and executed based on resource capability and accumulation. During Critical stage state would face several challenges including the question of equal distribution of resources for all, equality of opportunities, laws and trials based on justice, reaching the poor and providing them basic amenities, demands for statehood, secessionists issues etc. Once the state has been with first two stages, it is assumed that all the threats and challenges have been cleared. Then the state moves to third stage-Developmental. Here the state could be in a position to handle all political, legal and cultural situations smoothly. This stage is also noted with deliberate participation of people in the political process and maximum opportunities for all to lead a better economic life.

In the case of Bangladesh, the state even has not completed its organic stage. Even after decades of its formulation, it failed to run based on its own constitution, failed to deliver a strong foreign policy and still struggling to execute its planning policies and programmes. Whatever mentioned above has a purpose to say that the fragile nature of Bangladesh state was the result of lack of coordination of its three branches of the state. This section clearly demarcates each periods of political developments in Bangladesh. The chapter finds that Bangladesh has been running through turbulent situations and all these political scuffle and skirmishes would have been the outcome of improper institutionalisation of state's organs.

### **3.2 The Genesis of Bangladesh**

India, the jewel of the British Empire, was granted independence, divided along religious lines and two nations were born-India and Pakistan on August 1947. Western Bengal became a state of India. Eastern Bengal became later East Pakistan. It also encouraged the split between Muslims and Hindus which resulted in Bengali Muslim support for the creation of Pakistan. The division into the two new countries caused the migration of more than 5 million people and appalling massacres as Hindus and Muslims fled. Mahatma Gandhi's Noakhali Diary gives us many woeful details. His peace mission has not yet fulfilled and Quid-e Azam's Pakistan is now a utopia and turned to Quid to al-Quida and Bangabandhu's Sonar Bangla is struggling for democracy, rule of law social justice, and principles of war of liberation. Bangladesh, the youngest nation in South Asia, tore itself apart from the then Pakistan in 1971 by fire of her freedom fighters, under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Mahatma M K Gandhi, Quid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman did not totally succeed, besides achieving partition and nationhood (Rabindranath 2016).

In 1947 the political scenario changed and the land Bangladesh inhabits now came to be known as East Bengal turned. There was apparent freedom, but not real. The freedom was shared with the West Pakistan that in fact pick-pocketed it. The West Pakistani rulers refused to give the East Pakistan its due. So it again prompted the people to protest and revolt. It all started with the question of language-Bangla or Urdu. Which one was to be made the national language of the whole Pakistan? The Bengalis were the majority and Bangla was spoken by fifty-four percent of the total population of Pakistan. So, they naturally expected Bangla would be the national language. On February 25, 1948, when Dharendra Nath Datta, a Bengali opposition member,



moved a resolution for recognising Bangla as a state language in the first session of Pakistan's Constituent Assembly, Liaquat Ali Khan, Muslim Prime Minister of Pakistan, opposed it, arguing that Pakistan was a language of Pakistan (Rabindranath 2016).

Liaquat was supported by Khwaja Nazimuddin, and hence they decided to proclaim Urdu would be the national language of Pakistan. On February 27, 1948 the students of Dhaka University staged demonstration against the speech of Liaquat and Nazimuddin and several pro-Bangali organisations were born within two years of Pakistan. The All Pakistan Awami Muslim League was formed as a breakaway faction of the All Pakistan Muslim League in June 1949. The word Muslim was dropped in 1955. Two parties of the same name were created in Pakistan on June 23, 1949 by Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as one of its three initial assistant general secretaries; and the other in the Northwest Frontier Province of the then West Pakistan by Manki Shareef (Schendel 2009).

In February 1950, both were merged, creating the All Pakistan Awami Muslim League with Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy as its leader. As the years went by, the Awami League became associated with the oppressed Bangla-speaking majority of the East Pakistan. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was elected party president in 1966, and the AL gained much popularity through the famous 6-point movement. However, during this period, Nachol Movement was organised by the communist cadres in East Bengal. None could say how many people were killed in the Nachol Movement in January 1950. It is said that several hundred Santhalis were killed and 1400 were arrested. As in Hajong area, in Nachol the deserted lands of the Santhalis were quickly distributed to Muslim refugees. Many Santhalis who returned later were homeless. Ila Mitra, a communist leader, known as Ila Rani to the Santhalis, who organised the movement there was arrested and tortured and produced before the Magistrate at Rajshahi charged with waging war against the state of Pakistan. The statement of Ila Mitra was a real barbarous image of the Muslim League Government of East Bengal (Rahm 1998).

Just after the initiation of Bengal language movement, Pakistan started its brutal crushing on Hindus in East Bengal in February 1950. There was again a communal flare-up in which 40 thousands of Hindus were killed, followed by an unprecedented level of 35 lakh Hindu migration from East Bengal to take shelter. Pakistan government was keen on brutalising both Bengal speaking Hindus and Muslims in east Bengal and it was reached its helm in 1960s. Bengalis

retaliated well under the charismatic leadership of Mujibur Rahman (Kamruddin 1991). With the support of all Bengalis including students, teachers and commoners, Mujibur Rahman had prepared and submitted their charter of demands to the Pakistan government.

### **3.3 The Six-Point Programme**

(1) The adoption of a Constitution which should provide for a federation of Pakistan in its true sense on the basis of the Lahore Resolution and the Parliamentary form of government, with the supremacy of the legislative council directly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise;

(2) The federal government should deal only with two subjects; viz.; Defence and Foreign Affairs, and all other residuary subjects should be vested in the federating states;

(3) Two separate but freely convertible currencies for two wings should be introduced, or if this is not feasible, there should be one currency for the whole country, but effective constitutional provisions should be made to stop the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan. There should be a separate banking reserve and a separate fiscal and monetary policy for East Pakistan;

(4) The power of taxation and revenue collection should vest in the federating units, and that the federal centre should have no such power. The federation would have a share in the state taxes for meeting its required expenditures. The consolidated Federal Fund would come out of a levy of certain percentage of all State taxes;

(5) There should be two separate accounts for foreign exchange earnings of the two wings, the earnings of East Pakistan should be under the control of the East Pakistan government and that of West Pakistan under the control of the West Pakistan Government: The foreign exchange requirement of the federal government would be met by the two wings either equally or in a ratio to be fixed; indigenous products should move free of duty between the two wings and the Constitution would empower the unit governments to establish trade and commercial relations with foreign countries, and

(6) A militia or Para-military force should be set up for East Pakistan (Rabindanath 2016).

The Six-Point Formula titled Our Right to Live was submitted to Pakistan by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 23, 1966. This was the celebrated historic Six-Point Programme of the

Awami League. It differed from the Bengali autonomy demand of 1950 and 1954 since it specially denied the centre the right of taxation and allowed the provinces to have the right to establish separate accounts of their foreign exchanges earnings. Ayub came to East Pakistan in March 1966 and made an extensive tour of the province; in all his public meeting, he spoke against six-point formula and Awami League. On 16 March at Rajshahi, Ayub pointed out that the six-point programme was aimed at achieving their dream of greater Bengal. Ayub called upon his followers that they should be prepared to face a civil war. Civil was a dangerous thing, but if a nation faces disruption, it as to be accepted. A brutal attack on armless and harmless Bengalis carried on by Pakistan army, millions died, women raped and thrown away and streets of Mirpur and Dacca were full of heap of dead bodies. But the constant pressure from AL and external actors, Pakistan decided to conduct election in East Bengal. AL won more than 70% of the total votes polled but there was no power transfer. In later stages, India had to intervene into the issue and India-Pak war of 1971 happened. In the same year, Pakistan’s army surrendered to India and Bangladesh won its long independence struggle (Rabindranath 2016).

**Table 2**

**National Assembly Election Result, Pakistan (1970)**

Awami League	167
People’s Party	88
All Pakistan Muslim League (Qaiyum)	9
Muslim League (Council)	7
Jamait-ul-Ulema-i- Islam (Hazarvi)	7
Markazi Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Islam (Thanvi)	7
National Awami Party (Wali-Muzaffar)	7
Other parties and Independents	21
Total	312

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

Though the constitution allows multi-party system in Bangladesh, the state has known for its two party systems. There are number of other small, regional parties cohabiting within these political parties. The forty plus years of state life show that the two party under the control of two women were in power in alternative terms. This section examines eight stages of the nature of Bangladeshi system and it also outlines some of the major political incidents and milestones that the state has gone through. The major civilian political system in Bangladesh are giving here in eight stages from 1971-2013: Parliament Democracy (1971-1975), Civilian Autocracy (1975), Military Autocracy (1975-1981), Military Autocracy (1982-1990), Parliamentary Democracy (1991-1996), Parliamentary Democracy (1996-2001), Parliamentary Democracy (2001-2006), Military backed Interim government (2007-2008) and Parliamentary Democracy (2009-2013).

**Table 3**  
**Forms of Governments in Bangladesh**

Forms of Government	Periods	Political Party/s	Ruler/s
Parliament Democracy	1971-1975	Awami League/BAKSAL	Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
Civilian Autocracy	1975 Aug-197 Nov	Awami League	Khondaker Mostaq
Military Autocracy	1975-1981	Military Government	Ziaur Rahman
Military Autocracy	1982-1990	Military Government	Hussain Mohammed Ershad
Parliamentary Democracy	1991-1996	BNP	Khaleda Zia
Parliamentary Democracy	1996-2001	Awami League/Govt. of National Consensus	Sheikh Hasina
Parliamentary Democracy	2001-2006	BNP	Khaleda Zia
Military backed Interim Government	2007-2008	Caretaker Government	Iajuddin Ahmed and Fakhruddin Ahmed
Parliamentary Democracy	2009-2013	Awami League	Sheikh Hasina

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

As far as the political life of Bangladesh is concerned, three competing visions of the nation Bengali, Bangladeshi, Muslim and two models of government-autocracy and democracy towered over since the late 1970s (Schendel 2004). The tensions between them have started since the beginning and resulted in wide spread political scuffle and capricious and unholy alliances between political parties during periods of both military and civilian rule. They have also highly influenced the kind of leadership that helps and nourishes in the Bangladesh political system. It is to be noted here that whatever party or military ruler is in power; the basic character of leadership in Bangladesh remains the same. It is always highly personalised and politicised based on patrimonial authority and maintained and operated through much complicated, complex, informal network of patron-client relations. The outcome is constant power game based two loose ideologies in the form of either furtive negotiations or political displays such as hartals, mass demonstrations, general strikes and police charges (Salahuddin 2004). It has far reaching impacts on society developments, state system, politics and civil military relations and it leaves most Bangladeshis with a sense of anguish about the country lack of guidance and direction.

### **3.4 Independent Bangladesh and the Formation of Provisional Government**

Bangladesh had a long political struggle with the support of huge chunk of East Bengalis against the united Pakistan administration. The struggle was against an established system so obviously the Pak administration had been powered with all the resources than East Bengalis. Despite the fact that East Bengalis were armless in the beginning, the political unity under the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made them powerful in terms of numbers and in articulating their objections towards One Language policy of Pakistan. Pak resorted to military actions, millions killed and East Bengalis under the shield of Mukti Bahini retaliated bravely. Later, though there were severe hurt done East Bengalis by the Pak Army, Mujibur Rahman had declared Bangladesh's independence on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1971. He was heading the Awami League then and people considered him as the leader of the liberation movement. On the very next day, he was also present in the national radio station and declared Bangladesh's independence on 27 March 1971.

Party leaders like Abdul Hannan, Major Ziaur Rahman etc. were part of this broadcasting event (Rahman 1998). There were several Commanding Officers who were actively involved in the liberation struggle and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman did not forget to mention their names also in the

broadcasting. Commanding Officer of Chittagong East Pakistan Rifles, Captain Rafiq BU, Commanding Officers like Major ZiaurRahman, Major Shafiullah, Major Khaled Musharraf etc revolted at different places with their forces and led the whole nation into victory. But, MujiburRahman was forcefully prisoned by the Pak administration on 26 March 1971. They were dragging into West Pakistan West Pakistan and did not allow him go back to his place till January 1972 (Akbar 1999).

After lots of chaos and political skirmishes, the other leaders in Bangladesh decided to take oath of office on 10 April 1971 in Meherpur. They had established their own government and Mujibur Rahman had given the apex position in the government. Later, when Mujibur Rahman was released, he was elected as the first president of the government in Bangladesh. Apart from Mujibur Rahman, the poet Syed Nazrul Islam was chosen and selected by the executive committee of the Awami League as the Vice President. Most of the members voted to chose Tajuddin Ahmed as the first Prime Minister of independent Bangladesh. Apart from all these relevant and important posts, there were several other members chosen as representatives of the people. Mr Monsur Ali, Khodokar Mustaq Ahmed, Mr. Kamruzzaman, and other senior Awami League leaders occupied important positions in the government. And the most crucial decision was to choose Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the supreme commander of the army. At the same time, the provisional government and its members decide to appoint Colonel M.A.G. Osmani as the Commander-in- Chief of the liberation army (Ahmed 2002).

Eventually, the members of the government decided to establish its secretariat, other prgans of the government and recruited plethora of civil servants and bureaucrats as heads of some of the important departments of the secretariat. It was a fact that the independence that Bangladesh leaders declared before it given by Pakistan was not a political independence. So the leaders of the provisional government decided to divide the whole Bangladesh into eleven different sectors to wage a strategic war against Pak army. These divisions that they made to conduct the war efficiently on an organized manner. This provisional government represented the whole Bengalis in East Pakistan and considered itself as legal and political entity of Bangladesh. Once the political confidence achieved, a strong attack with the supports of Indian counterparts waged and crushed down the Pak army. The designated Prime Minister, Tajuddin Ahmed engaged constantly with the Indian leaders and intergovernmental dialogue happened several times. After

days and days, with the mighty support of Indian government, Bangladesh's paramilitary force, MuktiBahini, gained freedom from Pakistan on 16 December 1971 (Chitkara 1997).

### **3.5 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Parliament Democracy: 1971-1975**

Bangladesh had witnessed lot of political dramas even after the declaration of political independence. The most decisive decision was the release of Sheik Mujibur Rahman on 8th January 1972. He was released from Pakistan after the strong pressure from international community on Pakistan and just after his release he was sent to Britain. In London, he was welcomed by many world leaders including British Prime Minister. His arrival as a national hero of Bangladesh in London had been celebrated by the world medias too. A new nation in South Asia born and Mujib reached to Bangladesh on 10 January 1972. On his arrival, Mujibur Rahman delivered a speech and congratulated the whole nation on their brave attempts to save their people from Pak attack. He congratulated the Mukti Bahini for delivering strong attack on Pak army and uniting the whole country into one (Basant 1973). After few days, Mujib took over the charge of whole country as the head of the state. He enjoyed all popular support and India had been assisting Bangladesh government in all possible ways. At the same time, he realized the relevance of political support of all political parties and people in the country. As there were enormous pressure on the government to deliver its welfare duties, unanimity in delivering all their plans sought. It was observed that the nature of newly elected government can be seen as executive prime minister as the executive head of the state, constitutional head and ceremonial presidency, an independent judiciary and a unicameral legislature based on Westminster model. The basic four principles of the Bangladesh's constitution are nationalism, secularism, socialism and democracy (Uddin 1991).

The very first national assembly election in Bangladesh turned out to be a huge victory for Awami League and its alliance parties. In the year 1973, AL had recorded a huge victory because of its national image as the protector and savior of people from the Pak. The broad-based popular appeal of Awami League, social representation in membership and its strong organizational strength could help the party gain a historical victory in Bangladesh. Though the new country had not blessed with any experienced leaders, they had to heavily depend on civil servants and bureaucrats. The first government had to focus on relief management, rehabilitation and welfare activities and reconstruction of the political institution, reeling economy and fractured society

(Uddin 1991). What Mujibur Rahman focused to nationalize majority of the national resources in the country including economy, banking and industrial sector.

As scholars pointed out, Bangladesh was economically very weak and its economic base to boost its country was producing nothing. Apart from these economic and societal issues, even his own party members had indulged in factional politics and it killed the chance of party's next chance to come back to power. Looking at the devastation, famine and economic backwardness, U.S. Secretary of State termed Bangladesh a Bottomless Basket (Ahmed 1999). In December 1974, the president of the state declared to initiate to cope up the continuing economic deterioration and the increasing civil disorder. Such situation forced the head of the state to declare emergency in the same year. At the same time, the same period had also witnessed major constitutional amendments. It decided to keep check the powers of the legislative organ, attempts to introduce measures to make judiciary independent, move to form an executive presidency and establishment of one-party system that is the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL). He asked all the party members to support these above mentioned moves and decided to use the existing parliamentary majority of the Awami League (Schendel 2004).

**Table 4: National Assembly Election Result, Bangladesh (7th March, 1973)**

Political Parties	Seats Contested	Seats Won	% of Seats Secured
Awami League	300	292	73.17
National Awami Party (proMoscow)	223	-	8.59
Jatio Samajtantrik Dal (National Socialist Party)	236	1	6.48
National Awami Party (Bhashni)	169	-	5.42
Independent and Others	159	6	6.34
Total	1087	299	100

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*



But the first government could not be able to perform up to the expectations of commoners. Whatever be the promises and election campaigns were gone with the wind and there were no signs of economic developments, industry progress, welfare measures, social harmony, and there was no political consensus between parties to initiate a national strategy to direct the whole Bangladesh into new dawn. Mujib came to be known as authoritarian leader as his BAKSAL turned out to be a disaster and most of the other party leaders considered it as an attempt to make Bangladesh as one party system. Army was politicized in total and many of the army heads started working for the political interests of the ruling party. At the same time, there were disturbances within the army to go for a military coup against existing regime. Many of the army heads including K M Shafiullah, A.K. Khandker etc. remained silent and stunned during this situation. As a response of this situation, in month of August 1975, the national father was assassinated. His families were also assassinated by a group of mid-level army officers. Except his two daughters, Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana, rest of the members of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's family were died in the act. Later, after a break, a new government under the leadership of Khondaker Mostaq Ahmad came into being (Rashid 1999).

### **3.6 Short Period of Civilian Autocracy: 1975 August - 1975 November**

Mr. Khondaker Mostaq Ahmad was also senior member and minister of Mujibur Rahman's regime. With the support of others, he established a new government and seemed very busy with new measures to change some of the policies of Mujibur Rahman. Actually Mr. Khondaker was forced to introduce these changes as there were some fundamental differences in the working principles of previous regimes of Mujibur Rahman. But even after the coming of new government, Bangladesh politics and society had seen the removal of Mr. Khondaker after a military coup. Khondaker's administration was removed and replaced with new one. There were constant clashes between the army heads of the state and civilian and political leaders. It made the country highest political posts in a vacuum (Halim 2016). Army's position in these continuing political skirmishes and scuffles was crucial to see and observe. With the strong support of Bangladesh's opposition parties and other critics of the ruling government, the army heads of the state were successful to organize one more military coup to totally derail the government, destabilise the system first and take back the steering gear. Ahmad's effort to form and run a civilian government, thus, had spoiled by military. The main criticism against Mujib's

administration was his authoritarian character and not allowing any other political elements to settle in.

### **3.7 Ziaur Rahman and Military Autocracy: 1975-1981**

After the removal of Khondaker Mostaq Ahmad, the independent Bangladesh had witnessed severe political crisis. Army and civilian leaders had been divided into two different blocs and with the support of opposition political leaders, army launched their own political strategies. Arresting and killing of pro-Mujib politics and taking long and constant political revenges on them had become normal scenes. A group of army personnel assassinated Brigadier General Khaled Musharaf had turbulated the scene again. This period also witnessed the emergence of Ziaur Rahman and he was also arrested and send to jail for short periods (Sen 1986). After his release, Zia tried to take the benefits of the momentum and of political quagmire. He tried to communicate to the Bangladesh's people to bring order and calm to the country. The surprising move was his full and continuous support to President Chief Justice Sayem, a man who headed the civilian system. What Sayem did to the nation was also memorable. On behalf of Zia, Sayem called for a new election and request the people and all political parties to cooperate with the government to form a new government based on democratic principles. But there were rejections from various political parties and he dissolved the existing parliament and declared national emergency under the provisions of martial law. Consequently, Bangladesh was aiming for a multi-party democracy with full freedom of the press by declaring a new election (Rashid 1999).

Ziaur Rahman came into the political scene of Bangladesh and the emergence of a military ruler to rule the country has become a new phenomena. By taking the benefits of Martial Law Administration, he decided to change majority of the government policies and made many changes in the administration. The crucial decision he initiated was to cancel Mujib's idea of BAKSAL and lifted the ban on all political parties to operate. By doing so, he could able to boost and energize the multiparty system and his attempts were somehow encouraged the demoralized bureaucracy to work active. With respect to economic development programs, many radical initializations had been done. Basic infrastructure was improved and atmosphere for press to work freely and without fear was arranged. Zia also gave stressed the relevance of family planning by each Bangladeshi's to re-direct the country into national development. Later, after

establishing his space and role in Bangladeshi society, Zia assumed the role of Chief of Martial Law Administration and took charge as the head of the state in November 1978 (Ahmed 1994).

**Table 5**

**National Assembly Election Result, Bangladesh (1979)**

Political parties	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats lost	Share of votes
BNP	298	207	91	39.75
AL	295	39	256	23.07
ML/IDL	265	20	245	10
JSD	240	8	232	7.1
AL (M)	183	2	181	2.65
BGF	46	2	44	2.68
BJL	14	2	11	0.5
BGA	18	1	17	0.2
SD	19	1	18	NA
JEP	5	1	4	0.2
NAP (M)	89	1	88	2.2
Independents	654	16	--	--

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

### **3.8 Ziaur Rahman's 19 Programme**

Once Zia came into the role of a national head, his military attitude started changing. Zia started introducing several people friendly measures to establish democracy in Bangladesh. Actually, Bangladesh has seen a different Zia during these periods. He came up with 19 programme strategies as a solution to the socio, political and economic problems of struggling Bangladesh. He also started removing the influence of military or martial law impacts. As a result, Ziaur Rahman got huge victory in the year 1978 and secured 76% of the total votes polled. In the year 1978, November, government had thrown away the existing ban on political systems and parties (Schendel 2004). In the 1979, Bangladesh had witnessed a new election, in which more than 30

parties shown their interests to participate. One could label this period or these decisions as deliberate moves to make Bangladesh a democratic country based on constitution and make the country free from Martial Laws which were initiated long before. Ziaur Rahman founded a new party, Bangladesh Nationalist Party, which already had strong roots in Bangladesh society through different names. The main contest was between Awami League and Bangladesh Nationalist Party. Zia initiated moves to amend the constitution intended to make prime minister as the executive head of the state appointed by the president and more provisions were supposed to incorporate to make prime minister responsible to a parliamentary majority and parliaments decision (Schendel 2004). Based on nation's sovereignty and national economic independence, Zia started developing foreign policy with the support of experts (Schendel 2004).

But in the month of May 1981, Bangladesh had witnessed another shameful military coup in which Zia, the prime minister of the nation, was assassinated. Zia already had verbal clashes with the dissident in the military and it was suspected that the military dissidents were behind Zia's murder. After Zia, it was his follower, Vice President Justice AbdusSattar as per the provisions of the constitution came to power as acting president. Without any political pressures and influences, he had continued Zia's policies and programmes. Later, he called for new elections and because of the huge popularity of Ziaur Rahman, Sattergot tremendous majority. This period again showed the stronghold of BNP as a national party (Islam 1995).

### **3.9 Hussain Mohammed Ershad's Regime of Military Autocracy: 1982-1990**

Again on 24 March 1982, there was an attempt for military coup and the army chief Hussain Mohammed Ershad assumed power in Bangladesh. Being a military head, the whole Bangladesh was expecting more political and military related issues in the coming years. Ershad took extreme steps to remove all democratically elected and selected leaders and suspended the constitution. The next step was to declare martial law and from the very next day Bangladesh fell under the strong holds of martial law. He points that Bangladesh had been affected with corruption, ineffective governance, poor management, lack of communication between civilian system and military heads etc. But as an astonishing contradiction, he assumed the role of both head of the state and head of the army. He forced all other parties to participate in local election under martial law period but it was denied.

But Ershad had been getting constant support, financial and managerial, from Awami League to direct the country straight. He assumed the role as head of the state without being participated in the democratic process, so Awami League decided to go for a national referendum. Though the majority was too small, Ershad won people's support. Later stages had shown that Ershad took initiatives to hold local council elections and majority of the seats won by the ruling party only. He had also re-started the decentralization programmes of Ziaur Rahman, associational rights, freedom and space for critical debates were restored. Ershad was aware of the vulnerability of Bangladeshi political system to military coup, so he attempted to divide the whole army into different sections made them more focussed on national duty rather political duty (Ahmed 1999).

**Table 6**

**Result of Parliament Election, Bangladesh (1986)**

Political parties	Seats contested	Share of votes
Jatiya Party (JP)	153	42.3
BAL (Hasina)	76	26.2
JIB	10	4.6
BML	4	1.4
CPB	5	0.9
NAP (M)	2	0.7
NAP (B)	5	1.3
BAKSAL	3	0.7
BWP	3	0.5
JSD (Siraj)	3	1.2
Independents	32	16.3
Total	296	--

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

Bangladesh Nationalist Party found a new leader this time, Begum Khaleda Zia and under her leadership, BNP fought parliamentary elections which held in the month of May 1986. The election result reads several political changes in the political history of Bangladesh. The Jatiya

Party secured three hundred seats in election to the national assembly of Bangladesh (Roy 1999). The election or democratic process got some credibility as Awami League leaders decided to fight the election. Sheikh Hasina Wazed, the leader of Awami League, came up with many allegations about the credibility of this election. She complained that there are instances of voting irregularities, fraud acts and ballot box theft. By looking at the political prospects in future, Ershad decided to resign as Army Chief and go ready for the elections going to be held in October 1986 (Ahmed 2000). BNP started complaining the vindication of martial law still in the Bangladeshi society and refused to lineup opposing candidates. But the AL in large numbers participated in the election process and announced a number of election promises. The result was exciting for Ershad won 84% of the total votes polled. There several questions raised by opposition parties on the credibility of this elections. Ershad claimed that there were more than 50 percentage of the people participated in the process but BNP leaders and international media claim that it is below 30 percentage and complained of voting fraud works and irregularities (Ahmed 2000).

Ershad again decided and declared that he will save Bangladesh from the clutches of martial law. Later in November 1986, Ershad's administration boosted the relevant steps to amend the constitution by taking their two-thirds majority benefits. The president's very first step was to lift martial law and at the same time, the leaders of AL including Sheikh Hasina decided to assume their seats in the Jatiya Sangsad (Schendel 2004). But the most interesting step carried out by the ruling regime was to give appropriate representation to military personnel in local administrative councils. For that they have introduced a legislative bill. But it instigated a new debate and discussion in national assembly by opposition parties. Realizing the relevance of such bill, AL decided to compromise with other parties on this issue. By doing so, first time in the history of Bangladesh, Awami League and Jamaat Islami united with opposition parties (Schendel 2004). The ruling regime started to prison number of opposition party leaders under Special Powers Act, 1974 (SPA). Ignoring all these arrests and suppressive measures by the regime, opposition parties decided to carry their agenda ahead. They organized nationwide protests, demonstrations and marches. It again forced Ershad to declare national emergency and dissolve parliament on an urgent basis. Because of the mounting pressure from all corners of life, it decided to conduct election in the month of March 1988 (Rabindranath 2010).

All the main opposition political parties decided to keep aloof from election process and told all other social outfits to do not participate in the coming polls. They added that the existing government was engaged in illegal activities and was no proved to run a system and to conduct an election. Despite of the refusal and constant marches and protests, still the government decided to proceed with election. Election had been conducted and the ruling Jatiya Party secured a good majority and it got 251 of the total 300 seats (Hasan 1997). The new government came into power and introduced various bills through its different sessions. The most important initiation of the new governed was the amendment and it made Islam as the state religion of Bangladesh. At the end of 1989, the situations in Bangladesh had turned to be normal and local administrative level elections were happened without any sort of violence and extra politicization. But there were also pressures started mounting on Ershad's government and constant strikes, protests, marches and demonstrations against the rung governments had been organized and it disturbed the whole system in the country (Hasan 1997). The continuous criticism against Ershad's governance led to his resignation on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1990. Thereafter again an interim government on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1991 assumed power to hold a free and fair election.

### **3.10 Khaleda Zia and Parliamentary Democracy: 1991-1996**

From 1991-1996, the political system in Bangladesh had been dominated by Bangladesh Nationalist Party. It secured majority of the seats and spaces. But it reached to that position because of its coalition with parties like Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh. The new national alliance unanimously chooses Khaleda Zia as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. There were only few political parties secured more than 10 members in the 1991 Parliament, They were BNP directed by Khaleda Zia, Shekh Hasina's Awami League, Golam Azam's Jammaat e Islami party and Rahman Choudhury's Jatiya Party (Jalal 1990). The newly elected government and majority confidence allowed them to come up with several fundamental changes even in the constitution. Many adequate changes added to the constitution of Bangladesh and attempts had been made to provide ample space and environment for parliamentary democracy. The main move was to regain the post of primeminister as the executive head of the state as it mentioned and enshrined the 1972 constitution of Bangladesh. As an important decision, in the month of October 1991,

the elected representatives of Bangladesh Parliament unanimously elected Abdur Rahmanas the new head of state (Jalal 1990).

**Table 7**

**Bangladesh National Assembly Election Result (1991)**

Political Parties	Number of Candidates Elected	Percentage of Total Votes Casted
BNP	139	30.81
AL	88	30.08
Jaatiya Party	35	11.92
Jamaat i Islami	18	12.13
Pro Mosco Leftists	11	3.50
Pro Chinese Leftists	1	1.23
Orthodox Islamic Party	1	2.28
Independent & Others	1	8.5
Total	299	100

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

In March 1994, disputes and debates about parliamentary by-election, which the opposition argued that the ruling regime government had rigged. Consequently, it led to strong opposition and the entire opposition boycotted the parliament for a long. The opposition had started several anti government activities and resorted to protests, strikes and marches. They demanded the resignation of Khaleda Zia's ministry on the name of failure in creating a peaceful and development oriented Bangladesh. Again, Bangladesh has fallen into a political crisis where caretaker government was the last option. The Commonwealth Secretariat made number of efforts to mediate in the issues. In late December, another attempt had been made to call both political parties a sort out the existing political conundrum. But it resulted in vain as both sides were not ready to accept the consensus and recommendations proposed by the mediators. Later, the opposition resigned walked out and collectively submitted their resignation from the Parliament. But the opposition continued their demonstrations and marches against the ruling regime and forced the government to resign. The year 1995 witnessed bandhs and hartals which



lasted for more than 200 days and affected the life of common life of Bangladeshis badly. Responding to the national situations, the AL in opposition, decided to boycott election to national assembly of Bangladesh which was scheduled for 15 February 1996 (Jahan 2002).

BNP came to power again in Feb, 1996 under the leadership of Khaleda Zia. As usual, the main three opposition parties blamed the fraud activities in the election and later they boycotted. Opposition parties' non-cooperation with the election procedures forced the political institutions to invite a caretaker government to neutralize the situations. In March 1996, after increasing political issues, skirmishes and turmoil, the Parliament decided to enact a constitutional amendment which invited a caretaker government to neutralize the situations and to hold a new election. In order to head the caretaker government, former Chief Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman was called and appointed to deal the situations. The interim government unanimously decided to hold the election in June 1996. New election held and Awami League secured the majority of votes and Sheikh Hasina became Prime Minister of Bangladesh (Ahmed 2002).

### **3.11 Sheikh Hasina and Parliamentary Democracy: 1996-2001**

In the year 1996, Bangladesh has seen new political experiments. Among them, the most discussed is Sheikh Hasina's Government of National Consensus. The National Consensus included ministers from the Jatiya Party, the Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal and the leftist party. Bangladesh was witnessing such cohabitation of all Islamist, secular and left parties in one government. But loopholes of alliance system had been coming out. It was Jatiya who came against the government. They haven't entered into political and formal cohabitation arrangement. So, when lack of consensus arose, Ershad, the party chief, pressurized the government and later withdrew his support in September 1997. It was also fact that only three parties secured seats more than 10 members in the 1996 election. They were Jatiya Party, Awami League and BNP. Because of ant incumbency, Ershad was sent to jail the administration and later in the month of January 1997 (Halim 2010).

**Table 8**

**Bangladesh National Assembly Bye-Election Result (1996)**

Political Parties	Seats Won
Awami League	149
BNP	113
Jaatiya Party	30
Jamaat i Islami	3
Islami Oikyo Jote	1
Independent	2
JSD	1
Total	299

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

In retaliation to the incidents, Bangladesh Nationalist Party walked out from parliament in the year 1997. BNP was out of parliament for a long time, but after making an agreement in March 1998, they back to the parliament. In June 1999, the amounting political crisis made the BNP to abstain with other opposition parties from attending Parliament. They have engaged in increasing number of marches, nationwide general strikes, protests and hartals for 6 days in 1997 and continuous 27 days in the year 1999. The opposition collective consciousness decided to form another political formation to oppose the anti-democratic policies and moves of ruling regimes and also decided collectively to boycott parliamentary by-elections and local government elections. The demanded the governing bodies to maintain and ensure electoral fairness. But the government was not ready to respond positively to the demands of oppositions and eventually opposition has subsequently boycotted municipal council elections in February 1999. It also led to boycott parliamentary by-elections and the Chittagong city corporation elections. The dissatisfied oppositions intensified the struggle and called for national bandhs and hartals. Political responses of AL were minimal and asked the ruling government to step down and demanded the initiation of caretaker government to rule the country and hold a free and fair election (Halim 2010).

### **3.12 Khaleda Zia and Parliamentary Democracy: 2001-2006**

From 2001 to 2006, Bangladesh Nationalist Party ruled the country under the leadership of Khaled Zia. BNP got two third majority in the JatiyaSangsad but AL could score only 6 seats which made them politically weak in the national assembly. With the support of several fundamental and Islamist parties, Khaleda Zia could be able to make it twice. Though there weren't that much peoples nod for her first regime, still Khaleda Zia made it. But Awami League didn't accept BNP's election victory claiming that there were several fraud activities happened. It led to many skirmishes and scuffle between two major parties from 2002 to 2004 (Haq 2008). The situations turned turbulent when a group of terrorist attacked Awami League's rally on 21 August 2004. Many leaders including Rahman was murdered and thousands of casualties were reported. The AL leader Sheikh Hasina was also attacked and she survived with injuries to her ears. The attack resulted in the assassination of 24 people and 13 bombs were thrown and blasted. Awami League decided to deal with this terrific act politically and they called for nation wide bandhs and hartals 24 August, 2004. Such responses made the prime minister to order for a strong probe into the issue. It was alleged that the ruling party was behind the attack and the role of Tarique Rahman, son of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, along with the then State Minister Lutfuzzaman Babar were also noted by the opposition party, AL (Haq 2008).

**Table 9**

**Bangladesh National Assembly Election Result (2001)**

Political Parties	Seats Won
BNP led four party alliance	214
BNP	193
JP (N-F)	2
Islami Oikyo Jote	2
Jamat I Islami	17
Awami League	62
Jatiya Party	14
JP (Monju)	1
Independent	7
Total	298

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

Bangladesh had become a place of turbulences thereafter and number of terror attacks haken the whole country. In the year 2005, fundamental groups like JMB conspired to launch number of terrorist attacks in in Bangladesh. Security personnel found more than 500 bombs at 300 locations in more than 50 cities on 17 August 2005. The country has become full of chaos and disturbances. A terror attack on14th August 2005 resulted in the death of two Supreme Court judges of Bangladesh. Immediately, the government announced to form a Special Rapid Action Battalion to handle the situation and catch all criminals. All fingers were pointed towards JMB and may of the JMB activists arrested and imprisoned (Halim 2010). There were standoffs between JM and Rapid Action Force happened and many of the JMB activists including Shaykh Abdur Rahmanand Bangla Bhai were caught and executed. BNP was, to some extent, able to control the situation still the opposition party's organised rallies and marches against the apathy of existing rule. But people considered BNP' rule was a failure in maintaining law and order in the society. Over politicization of the political institutions and fundamentalist favouring attitude made BNP's chance for next term lessened. There were also price hike in basic commodity

prices which resulted dissatisfaction among the commoners and consequently BNP had to face a bitter defeat in the next election (Halim 2010).

### **3.13 Military backed Interim Government: 2007-2008**

After long political clashes between the two major political parties in the country, election to the national assembly had been announced but it did not happen as the military and other judicial experts found that Bangladesh has become a fragile country, running direction less. So, a caretaker government as per the provisions of the constitution came and took charge. The caretaker government blamed Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Awami League for their unnecessary political and factional games. It added that both Shekh Hasina and Khaleda Zia lost their foresight for the welfare and development of Bangladesh and ignored their responsibilities towards Bangladeshis. Both political parties and leaders failed to suggest an apt candidate for the post of Chief Advisor. Since they failed to recommend a name, it fell on the President of the nation to assume the charge. Immediately the then President Iajuddin Ahmed assumed charge (Halim 2010).

Being a president of the nation, he already loaded with many responsibilities. Still, Iajuddin Ahmed found time to form a new advisory committee including ten expert members and they will have to act as ministers. The Chief Advisor has the responsibility of Defense Ministry too. Therefore, his communication with the army must be very careful. The caretaker government had appointed M Mukhlesur Rahman Chowdhury as the chief Presidential Advisor and given him the charge of Minister of State. Mr. Chowdhury had given the most important duties including negotiate and deliver discussions with each political parties on crucial aspects. But again, there were some issues emerged within the caretaker government. This time the military pursued the caretaker government to change the chief advisor. In the month of January 2007, Iajuddin Ahmed put his resignation and allowed or members to choose another member (Halim 2010). Immediately, a famous world-bank economist, Fakhruddin Ahmed, was appointed as the chief advisor of caretaker government. He was loaded plethora of responsibilities including root out corruption and make the nation ready for election based n democratic principles. As a first step, national emergency was declared a sensible step had been taken up to handle corruption and political issues which are arising in the day to day affairs of Bangladesh. It was reported that around 200,000 people were prisoned and speedy measures took to curb corruption. The

caretaker government declared that it would conduct election to national assembly in the year 2008 (Andaleeb 2009).

In the month of April 2007, the caretaker government had come up with an interesting move to expel both the two big political leads of the country. Such move was noted and debated across the globe and political experts called it as Minus Two Formula. Why military backed caretaker government had tried to expel both Sheikh Hasina and Khaled Zia and answer lies in the explanation of unfulfilled developmental and welfare objectives of both leaders. Sheikh Hasina left Bangladesh for United States but on her return she was arrested by the army for her alleged role in killing opposition party members. Police charged her for corruption cases and two big businessmen in the country testified that they had given US\$1.16 million to Sheikh Hasina. It put the Awami League and Sheikh Hasina in trouble (Rabindranath 2016). In retaliation, the Awami League activists came on the streets and organised number of protests, marches and demonstrations. Even the world leaders including several British MPs, requested the caretaker government to release her. Khaleda Zia was also charged of tax evasion by the caretaker government. Another political leader Tarique Rahman was also faced heat burns from caretaker government and later he was arrested and exiled forcefully for his role in grenade attacks in the year 2004. He was also charged for corruption and money laundering (Rabindranath 2016).

### **3.14 Sheikh Hasina and Parliamentary Democracy: 2009-2013**

The Awami League came to power by winning the vast majority of parliament seats in the election held on 29 December 2008, and Sheikh Hasina became the Prime Minister of Bangladesh for the second time. Her cabinet took oath on 6 January 2009. HM Ershad was promised to be made President in exchange for support for Awami League, but despite supporting Awami League, this promise was not fulfilled and Zillur Rahman became President (Halim 2016). The first two years under this government was peaceful, but a debatable issue took place when the Awami League government enforced an existing law to reclaim the house where Khaleda Zia had lived for nearly 40 years for a nominal cost. Khaleda Zia moved to the house of her brother Sayeed Iskandar at Gulshan. In protest BNP would abstain from parliament. This period also observed tremendous economic growth (Halim 2016).

**Table 10****Bangladesh National Assembly Election Result (2008)**

Alliance	Political Parties	Seats Won	Percentage of Votes
Grand Alliance	Bangladesh Awami League	230	49.0
	Jatiya Party	27	7.0
	Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal	3	0.6
	Workers Party of Bangladesh	2	0.3
	Liberal Democratic Party	1	0.2
Four Party Alliance	BNP	30	33.2
	Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh	2	4.6
	Bangladesh Jatiya Party	1	0.1
	Islami Oikya Jote	--	--
Independent &Others		4	4.9
Total		300	99.99

*Source: Election Reports, Bangladesh Election Commission*

Controversy erupted in 2011 when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina declared the abolition of the care-taker government system, contradicting her own motives and views in the mid-90s when she had demanded that elections should be held under neutral care-taker governments. Hasina justified this by stating that a neutral care-taker government may abuse its power and take unlawful and autocratic control of the country. At the same time, arrests and trials of members accused of war crimes of the political party Jamaat-e-Islami had begun. This caused major disagreements among the ruling Awami League with the chief opposition party BNP and its

major ally Jamaat (Rabindranath 2016). In a bid to return to the 1972 Constitution, the government made several reforms to the constitution of Bangladesh in 2011, and readopted Secularism. In 2012 a coup attempt against Hasina by mid ranking army officers was stopped, with Bangladesh army being tipped off by Indian intelligence agency (Halim 2016). Also in 2012, Bangladesh won a legal battle against Myanmar under international court regarding disputed sea territories, giving Bangladesh a tremendous advantage on the Oceanic areas.

The period 2012-2014 was marked by widespread political unrest and violence in the form of strikes, riots and acts of vandalism which led to massive property damages, economic losses and death of many ordinary citizens. Petrol bombs and cocktails were being used at their peaks for arson attacks. But the ruling party remained committed to their decision and compared the ongoing protests to acts of terrorism. Both the ruling party and the opposition received International criticism. The scheduled date of the 10th general election was 5th January 2014. The opposition party received several pleas by the ruling party to abandon their path of violence and join the election, but they repeatedly declined. Despite the crisis the controversial 5th January election was held with mass boycott from BNP and its major allies. Awami League had a landslide victory, and Sheikh Hasina was sworn in as Prime Minister for the third time on 9 January 2014, while Rowshan Ershad of the Jatiya Party became the new leader of the opposition, as Khaleda-led BNP boycotted the election. The ongoing BNP-Jamaat protests diluted after failing to stop the January 2014 election, and overthrow the ruling party, and by the end of March 2014, political stability was reached.

### **3.15 Analysis and Conclusion**

The state of Bangladesh has started its political life with lots of issues and lack of resources. Just after the inception, Bangladesh was in crisis and the whole economy was struggling and there were fears that the country might slide into anarchy. Critics insisted that Bangladesh required a social revolution, a thoroughgoing land reform and state socialism. Diametrically opposed were those who saw the solution in economic liberalisation and state support for the private sector. It was the struggle over these irreconcilable visions of the future that shook the edifice of the Bangladesh state in 1975. Mujibur Rahman's constitutional coup d'état of January had a plan to establish civilian autocracy. Immediately counter-forces built up, resulting in Mujib's assassination on 15 August and the installation of a military-backed government. This in turn



was overthrown by a second military coup on 3 November, followed by a third on 7 November. The man who now emerged as Bangladesh's ruler was Major-General Ziaur Rahman. One of his first acts was to ban political parties and crack down on the left parties that had inspired radical soldiers to carry out the last coup, planned as a soldiers' revolution in the service of the oppressed classes.

By the end of 1975 Bangladesh had turned its back on both Mujib's vision and the revolutionary path. The new regime of Ziaur Rahman (1975-81) marked a decisive break in the country's economic policies. It handed nationalised enterprises back to their former owners, favoured the private sector and export-oriented growth and sought to boost agriculture by introducing subsidies and a wide range of development projects. The foreign funds needed for these policies flowed in, making it possible for the Bangladesh economy to recover. The Zia regime set the country on a course of liberalisation from which it has not deviated since then. The regime of Ziaur Rahman also marked a decisive break in another sense: the emergence of military dominance in post-independence Bangladesh. Generals would rule Bangladesh for the next fifteen years, and, even after a popular uprising overthrew military rule in 1990, the army never really went back to the barracks. It has continued to loom as the life-or-death-dispensing power behind the throne of successive civilian governments up to the present.

The militarisation of the Bangladesh state so soon after the country's birth as a democratically ruled unit needs an explanation. Military dominance was not rooted in the history of the Bengal delta, but it had been an important feature in the colonial history of Punjab, the far-away, dominant region of Pakistan. In the late nineteenth century the British had developed an ideology that categorised certain South Asian populations as martial races who were better fighting material than others. Punjabis were seen as martial and several regions of Punjab became prime recruiting areas for the Indian army.

Ruled by a civil—military bureaucracy, Punjab became the garrison province of the Raj. After 1947 this experience gave the Punjabi Muslim elite the edge in the struggle for power in Pakistan. Initially there were three main groups who thought they would be the leaders of the new state of Pakistan: Bengalis, Muhajirs and Punjabis. The Bengalis lost out almost immediately, and the Muhajirs were sidelined in the course of the 1950s. With the ascent of Punjabi power within Pakistan, civil institutions gave way to military ones. The armed forces

were a Punjabi institution to begin with: in 1947, Punjabis made up 77 per cent of the Pakistan army. As the army carried out its first coup in the late 1950s, Punjabi dominance reached its peak. The military-bureaucratic elite that now ruled Pakistan perpetuated the paternalistic authoritarianism that had been the hallmark of British colonial control over Punjab.

As the Pakistan state took on the military-authoritarian features that the British had perfected in Punjab, it turned East Pakistan into an internal colony. The Bengali elite's exclusion from all areas of life eventually forced an end to Pakistan. But state-building was a more continuous to the process. In Bangladesh, the 1970s were in many ways a replay of the 1950s: high hopes' for democratic control were soon dashed as the state struggled through increasingly authoritarian civil rule before finding its feet after an army take-over. Bangladesh was to be under military dictatorships, modelled closely on Pakistan's Ayub—Yahya regime, from 1975 to 1990. Arguably, from the 1950s to the present, military rule has not been the exception to the civilian norm in the Bengal delta but rather the other way around: military men controlled the state for twenty-eight years from 1958.

In many ways the Bangladesh state was the Pakistan state by another name. The armed forces, the state institutions that had been shaken up most by the 1971 war, soon regained their balance. The regime of Ziaur Rahman was followed by that of another general, Hussain Muhammad Ershad (1982-1990). In both cases a military man seized power, cancelled basic rights and banned political parties in return for promises of swift development and a squeaky-clean administration. In both cases he tried to build legitimacy by creating a political party and have himself elected as president of Bangladesh with sweeping powers. And then, suddenly, he was removed from the scene. This happened in the most drastic fashion to Ziaur Rahman, who was assassinated in a botched military coup during a visit to Chittagong in 1981.

A military-backed civilian government took over for some months before Chief of Staff Ershad overthrew it, thus becoming Bangladesh's second dictator. Ershad was forced out of power by a popular uprising in 1990. Since then the military have left the top positions in the state to civilians. The political system that evolved in Bangladesh between 1975 and 1990 was one in which the judicial and legislative branches became hostage to military-controlled executive power. In this period civil rights were much more curtailed than they had been in the initial years after independence. This was something that many citizens of Bangladesh refused to accept.

Their aspirations for the future expressed themselves in continual struggles to improve the quality of their lives and to increase their influence over the state. Throughout the fifteen-year period of military rule, many Bangladeshis strove for a return to parliamentary democracy against forces that tried hard to shield the state from popular influence. Their efforts culminated in a prolonged and widespread campaign of agitation in 1990, which finally managed to dislodge military rule, topple the Ershad regime and force a return to parliamentary democracy.

The return to civilian rule was widely celebrated in Bangladesh. Many saw it as a clean break with the immediate past and a fresh start for a truly democratic Bangladesh. Soon, country had a democratically elected parliament and a popular government eager to usher in a better future. Even so, it had to deal with many continuities stemming from the period of military rule. Three legacies in particular have persisted: a struggle between incompatible visions of the nation, the rise of Islamist politics and an inability to accommodate regional autonomy. The main political legacy of the period of military rule was the emergence of an alternative view of the nation. Zia had sought to gain legitimacy for his military regime by constructing a political party and having it stand in elections that he controlled. The party that Zia created, in 1978, was the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Its ideology was nationalist conservatism and after Zia's death in 1981 his widow Khaleda Zia was appointed as the leader and despite her political inexperience she held most the party together. Under her leadership the BNP grew into a formidable political force. At the same time, Zia's successor, Ershad, created his own party, more right wing than the BNP. It took the name Jatiyo (National) Party in 1986. Unlike the BNP, the Jatiyo Party never played more than a minor role after parliamentary democracy was restored. After Ershad's fall, elections for the national parliament were held in 1991.

A multitude of parties participated and the result was open and unpredictable. Two parties clearly dominated the outcome, however: the BNP of Ziaur Rahman and the Awami League. The BNP won 31 per cent of the vote and the Awami League 28 per cent. Consequently, Khaleda Zia put together the new government and became the prime minister of Bangladesh. Since then parliamentary elections have been held in 1996 and these cemented the dominance of the two leading parties. In 1996 the Awami League won with 38 per cent (BNP 34 per cent) and in 1996 BNP won with 41 per cent (Awami League 40 per cent). This unofficial two-party

parliamentary system hit a snag in 2006, however, when elections planned for 2007 had to be postponed because of wide-spread pre-election violence. A military-backed interim government took over in early 2,007 and postponed the elections to 2008, fuelling worries that parliamentary democracy is once again in jeopardy. In 2009, Awami League came back to power with thumping majority. Opposition had rejected the election result as a huge chunk of population did not participate in the election and they called the then government as undemocratic. The period from 2009 to 2013 was marked number of political events including 2009 BDR mutiny, 2011 military attempt for a coup, constitutional amendment, death punishment for war criminals etc. But people had a feeling that there is a stable government and that stability needs for a peaceful and developing Bangladesh.

## **Chapter IV**

### **The History and Evolution of Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh**

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### The History and Evolution of Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh

#### 4.1 Prelude

The evolution of civil military relations in Bangladesh reveals that the military has been an integral part of politics. This nexus were formed at the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 when the civilian population and Mukti Bahini collectively worked against the military domination erstwhile WestPakistan. This chapter points out the fact that the historical clubbing of civil military relations in Bangladesh has two sides; positive and negative. Unfortunately, Bangladesh has become a country which suffers a lot from the complexities in civil military relations. Just after Independence, Mujibur Rahman turned authoritarian and introduced one party system at the end of his tenure. From August 1975 to December 1990, Bangladesh remained under military administration. It ensured a wider political role for the military. Eventually, the military leaders expanded their horizon beyond the barracks. Later, the army obtained an effective control mechanism over all political and non-military organisations. It has also seen the consistent increase in defence allocation by civilian governments ensured the continued support of the armed forces.

Civilian governments have often relied on the military for a number of nonmilitary functions. The army has often been called to help the civilian administration in the restoration of law and order, relief and disaster management activities, and anti-terror campaigns. During the second tenure of Khaleda Zia (2001-06), the army was actively involved in two law and order operations namely, Operation Clean Heart (16 October 2002–January 2003) and Operation Spider Web (20 July–14 August 2003). Two other factors have enabled the military to have a greater say in the running of the country. Firstly, Bangladesh has had three military governments headed by Khondakar Mustaque (1975), Ziaur Rahman (1977–81), and HM Ershad (1982–90). Besides these, there have been as many as 18 coup attempts between 1975 and 1990. Secondly, both military and civilian governments have been appointing retired service personnel at senior positions in the government and government-owned institutions. A large number of service officers have become diplomats, heads of government agencies or public. The armed forces are involved in a host of other activities, which are largely civilian and commercial in nature. Thus,

civil-military relations are a contest between military encroachment upon politics and popular opposition to authoritarian trends. At times, the military prevailed and took over the reins of power. There were occasions when popular opposition and disapproval kept the military within the barracks. So, civil military relations in Bangladesh are running through different phases. The chapter is an attempt to take all those historical glimpses of civil military relations in Bangladesh.

There are various interpretations about the historical evolution of civil military relations. General Von Clausewitz wrote the subordination of the political point of view to the military would be unreasonable, rather the subordination of the military point of view to the political is the only thing, which is possible. He argues that policy, the intelligent faculty, creates war. The war is only the instrument and not the reverse. Mao Tse-tung asserted "*Our principle is that the party commands the gun and the gun must never be allowed to command the party*" (Claude 1976: 222). The military intervention in politics creates a vicious circle that perpetuates the conditions of political underdevelopment that initially brought about military rule (Maniurzzaman 1987). The key factor in political development is the growth of durable political institutions.

The primary resources for developing political institutions in any country are the political skills of its politicians. Huntington views that the issue of 'civilian control' over military with the relative power of civilian and military groups. The civilian control may be exercised to some extent through maximizing civilian power as well as military professionalism. He explains the civil-military relations from the subjective and objective point of view. The subjective civilian control achieves its end by civilianizing the military and making them the mirror of the state. The objective of civilian control achieves its end by militarizing the military and making them the tool of the state with the recognition of autonomous military professionalism (Huntington 1965). Historically, the demand for objective control has come from the military profession and the demand for subjective control from the multifarious civilian groups anxious to maximize their power in military affairs.

S. E. Finer observes that the military, in the developing countries, often work on governments from behind the scenes. Even when they do establish a military dictatorship they usually fabricate some quasi-civilian facade of government behind which they retire as fast as possible. Overt military rule is therefore, comparatively rare and apparently short lived. The modes of

military intervention in politics are overt and direct (Finer 1988). Perlmutter states that modern military regimes are not purely military in composition. Instead they are mixed components, i.e., they are military-civil regime. He describes the three models of military in politics (1) the professional soldier (2), the praetorian soldier and (3) professional revolutionary soldier (Perlmutter 1981).

The professional military may be explained in terms of managerial, organizational, technical and subordinates to the higher political authority. The praetorian soldier challenges the civilian legitimacy of political authority and sometimes threatens the use of power. The professional revolutionary soldiers are generally anti-corporate in nature. They are dedicated to mass military mobilization and represent no social class. The Military government initially brings civilian technocrats and political renegades or rebels into their governing councils. But that does not omit the distinction between military and civilian regimes. The civilian counselors joining the military government hold office on the satisfaction of the military dictator.

Maniruzzaman delineates that politics is more of a vocation than soldiership. For success, politicians have to acquire proficiency in political skills as much as military officers have to gain fighting skills through long professional training. The political skills needed for developing a viable and self-sustaining political system involve ideological commitment, the capacity to respond to new challenges, and the arts of administration, negotiation, representation and bargaining. These skills can be acquired only in the hard school of public life. The military rulers severely restrict the free flow of the political process and force the politicians to confine into a long period of hibernation. The period of military rule is usually a total waste as far as the development of political skills is concerned. Military rulers are not only incapable to create effective political institutions but also fail to transfer their professional skills well to the sphere of politics (Maniruzzaman 1987). Morris Janowitz has argued that society and state are more complex than barracks where the army lives. The political organizations are valued for their effectiveness, adaptability and dignified by ideological images. They can be transformed into durable political institutions. The organizational logic of the armed forces is fully different from that of political formations (Maniruzzaman 1987).

Military personnel can bring only specialized perspectives and skills to the political arena. The development of political organizations, however, requires political skills that rise above



functional specialization. It can be acquired only through long and hard experience in public life. The military profession is a special type of vocation. It may be explained in terms of expertise, responsibility and corporatism which efficiently lead to the management of violence (Maniruzzaman1987).

The expansion of the role of a modern army seriously damages its military efficiency. Present-day military officers can indulge in politics only at the cost of their fighting skills. Perhaps for this reason, senior army officers who take over the civilian control of the state and want to stay in power beyond any specific limit generally give up their command in the armed forces. The military government primarily suffers from innate lack of legitimacy. As a result, the regime has to depend on the continuous support of the armed forces especially the officer corps. During the military rule, politics is banned or restricted in the other sectors of the polity and soon find their open expression in the armed forces and gradually deteriorate their unity, cohesion and morale as well as well as devotion to the profession. The distraction of politics also inevitably affects the pure technical expertise of army personnel.

#### **4.2 Background of Civil Military Relations**

The Bangladesh army is the lineal descendent of the British Indian and Pakistan army. It inherited not only the institutional framework of its predecessors but also their ethos and orientation against the politics of civilians and their consciousness of political power. As early as 1857, the politicization of the Bengali armed personnel from this part of the sub-continent was highly resented by the British generals. They deliberately excluded the Bengalis from the British Indian Army since the Mutiny of 1857. Major General Hearsey, one of the first British Generals took note of the original uprising in Barrack in 1857 and urged that recruitments of all Brahmins and Muslims of Hindustan cease (Cohen 1971: 32-36). Recruitment to the British Indian Army was thus largely confined to the northwestern part of India from the so-called martial races of Punjab (Cohen 1971: 32-236. That is why the number of Bengalis in the British Indian Army has always been very small. In 1930, the Indian Statutory Commission pointed: "Bengal with a population of 45 millions, provided 7,000 combatant recruits; the Punjab, with a population of 20 millions, provided 349, 000 such recruits. The Punjab and the United Provinces provided three-fourths of the total number of combatant recruits raised throughout India (Ahamed 1988)."

After the birth of Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign state on 16 December 1971, the military Junta refused to recognize the results of the general election of 1970, which led the people toward the liberation war. The general election, held in December 1970 clearly revealed the verdict of the people of Pakistan. But Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of PPP addressed, “two majority parties” in Pakistan. The first is in the eastern wing where the Awami League had secured 167 out of 169 seats reserved for East Pakistan in the 313-member National Assembly (Cohen 1971). The second is in West Pakistan where the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) had secured 88 out of 144 seats reserved for West Pakistan.

In addition, the main reasons for the break-up of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh were the lack of Bengali participation in central decision-making processes in Pakistan. The colonial style of exploitation of the then East Pakistan by West Pakistan further aggrieved this background. By 1970 out of twenty central secretaries only three Bengalis had attained the rank of secretary. Similarly, out of thirty-five army officers of the ranks of Major General Lt. General and General, there was only one Bengali.

On 7 March 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League, addressed a gathering of about a million people in the Ramna Race Course demanding the immediate abolition of Martial Law and transfer of power to the people’s elected representatives. He urged the people to continue their nonviolent non-cooperation movement until these demands were realized and declared that the struggle this time was for complete “emancipation and independence” (Maniruzzaman 1975: 41-48). But the military junta led by General Yahya Khan could not transfer power. On the contrary, the Pakistani army cracked down on an un-armed people in Dhaka at mid night on 25 March 1971 and arrested Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, proposed Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Consequently, the independence of Bangladesh and liberation war was declared by the then Major Ziaur Rahman on behalf of our great national leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The people of East Pakistan plunged into the liberation war. The Bengali personnel of the army stationed in East Pakistan also did revolt and sided with the people to fight for independence under the political leadership.

### **4.3 The Exile Government and the Liberation War**

Bangladesh formed a government on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1971 and through the proclamation of Independence, three members were, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Syed Nazrul Islam and Tajuddin Ahmed, elected as president, vice-president and prime minister. Later, due to Pakistan army's intervention in to the scene, all east Pakistanis spontaneously joined the liberation war. The number of Mukti Bahini was reported to be over two lakhs (Maniruzzaman 1975). A full-fledged and protracted war commenced people from every section of society came forward to join the fight. But they remained divided in faction and the government in exile was also confused by factional feud.

With the assistance of Indian Government, several camps were set up to train thousands of Bengali youths around the secure boarder areas. The Indian government also arranged special commando and guerilla training courses for Bengali youths in their military camps. It also helped to raise a special core of freedom Fighters called Mujib Bahini. On 16 December 1971 the Pakistani Army with 93,000 soldiers surrendered in Dhaka. The involvement of the Indian Army in the last phase of the Liberation War played a decisive role. The joint command of Bangladesh Mukti Bahini and Indian Allied forces led by Lt. General Jagjit Singh Aurora accompanied by Bangladesh exile government's representative Group Captain A. K. Khandker commanded the instrument of surrender. Once the instrument of surrender was signed, Aurora and Khandker departed from Dhaka. Bangladesh was for the time being left in the hands of the Indian Army. Finally, after a week of surrender, the exile government returned to Dhaka to manage an independent country. The government had no clear, independent ideas about the structure, composition and character of the new Bangladesh Army.

In the very early of January 1972 an eleven-member Central Board was constituted with the Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed as the chairman. Later, Mujib issued a Provisional Constitutional Order stipulating a unitary, parliamentary form of government, a Constituent Assembly and guarantee of specific fundamental rights. Stepping down from the post of President, Sheikh Mujib became the Prime Minister, swore in an extended cabinet and grasped the reins of power. Within a year, the Constituent Assembly including the national basic principles - Nationalism, Democracy, Socialism and Secularism adopted a constitution. It

provided for a unitary parliamentary system. The Awami League government then held general elections on 7 March 1973 securing 292 out of 300 seats in the national Assembly.

#### **4.4 Bangladesh Army and Pakistan Model**

While he initially attached great importance to the Freedom Fighters and discussed the idea of national militia, it received relatively less priorities. The new government of the Awami League led by Sheikh Mujib, strategically transformed the pre-trained Army Officers of the Freedom Fighters giving them promotion with two-year antedated seniority into a regular force of the Bangladesh Army. And the government followed the model of Pakistan Army's organization, structure, training and recruitment for the new army. In addition, the government proposed setting up a National Defence Academy. General Osmany, who had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation Forces during the war resigned in April 1972 and the post of C-in-C was abolished. On the same day, separate headquarters were established for the three services of the armed forces-Army, Navy and Air Force. Col. K.M.Shafiullah was appointed Chief of Army Staff, Col. Ziaur Rahman as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Col. Khaled Mosharrof as the Chief of General Staff. All the three officers belong to the east Bengal Regiment of the Pakistan Army and played active part as the command of 'S'-Force for Shafiullah, 'Z'- Force for Ziaur Rahman, and 'K'-Force for Khaled Mosharoff in the Liberation war. On the same day, Commodore Nurul Huq was appointed as the chief of Naval Staff and group captain A. K. Khandakr as the chief of Air Staff (Maniruzzaman 1975).

But the Freedom Fighters who had been inducted into the armed forces were not happy. Participation in the war was a political act and had fully politicized them. After independence, they were neither assigned political role nor were they given any part to play in the development activities of the state. The social status of the army was further downgraded by rising of a paramilitary force- the Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini and importance attached to it. The Awami League ruling elite as a counter force apparently built up the Bahini to the army. In addition, the crisis between the armed forces repatriated from Pakistan (about 28,000 men and 1100 officers) and those who (8000 men and 200 officers) fought in the liberation war was acute. The army officers returned from Pakistan were left out of the Bangladesh Army and many of the senior military officers were posted in insignificant posts after repatriation.

Although some of the officers were retired and others were posted out of the army, the basic problem however remained and simmered within the vast majority of the repatriated officers who had to be integrated into the new army under those who had previously been their junior officers. The conflict and jealousy also prevailed between the military and the more political para-militia, the Rakkhi Bahini. The multiplication of Bahinies, most of which belonged to the government or party in power, added to the problems of coordinating the law and order enforcing agencies of the new state. Thus, the new composition of the Bangladesh Army instantly gave rise to mutual suspicion, jealousy, rivalry and bitterness between the participants and the repatriated officers. In such a situation the basic cohesion required in any army hierarchy was difficult to achieve. In short, the origin of Bangladesh Army may be characterized as follows: (1) The battalions of the East Bengal Regiment (EBR) who formed the nucleus of the freedom fighters group in the war 1971 broke away the command and discipline of the army for which they had taken an oath of allegiance (2), Bangladesh Army followed the structural pattern of Pakistan Army in values and aspirations (Jahan 2000).

But the troops who had revolted once from the Pakistan Army and taken part in the war had undergone a change in their values and aspirations. They could not be expected to behave in a manner acceptable in a normal army establishment; (3), the newly recruited officers were tilted towards the influence of either Freedom Fighter Group or the Repatriated group in the army; (4), a group of freedom fighters headed by Col. Taher and Ziuddin earnestly tried to indoctrinate a section of the army in the philosophy of classless army which was contradictory to the old order; (5), Liberation forces within the army were subdivided in groups and subgroups according to their respective political or group affiliations; and finally (6), the induction of the repatriated officers into the army caused immediate bitterness among the Freedom Fighter officers. The resulting division into two broad groups created an almost permanent wound in the structure and composition in the Bangladesh Army.

#### **4.5 The First Army Intervention: Fall of Mujib**

In the early hours of the morning of 15 August 1975, Sheikh Mujib and most of his family members were killed by a group of former guerillas, majors in the Bangladesh Army, in a surprise attack. It was the reminiscent of the tactics used against the repatriated officers from Pakistan. The assassination of Mujib brought the army to the heart of the Bangladeshi political process. The coup leaders led by Maj. Farooq Rahman and Khondker Abdur Rashid made the pro-American Awami League leader, Khondker Mustaq Ahmed, the President. Mustaq issued a proclamation of martial law. But they did not suspend the Constitution and the parliament. He also issued an ordinance giving indemnity to the killers of Sheikh Mujib. Significantly, the army had suffered from two sharp divisions -participants and the repatriates' since its birth (Halim 2016).

In addition, the political dissidents like Col. Abu Taher and Col. Ziauddin joined the Sainik Sangstha (Revolutionary People's Army), an underground military organization, which comprised the members of, and the Mukti Bahini guerillas belonging to the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal. While the armed forces could not take advantage of their organizational strength, they could very well ascertained that their corporate interests were not safe in the hands of the Awami League regime. Thus they remained dissatisfied with the government. First, the military elite felt that the government had not been deeply interested in the development of defence services. Second, the revenue expenditure incurred on defence services was not only minimal but it was gradually reduced. In the 1973-74 budget, the revenue expenditure of defence was a little more than 16%, but in 1974-75 budget came down to 15% (Rabindranath 2010).

In 1975-76 budget estimate, the expenditure on defence forces was less than 13%. Third, the establishment of a new militia-the Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini (national security force) appeared as a parallel organization. It was planned that this militia would be increased annually so that by the end of 1980 its total strength would be about 120,000. It was also planned that one regiment of the Jatiyo Rakkhi Bahini would be placed under the command of each district governor. The military elite highly resented this move because it was symbolic for the fact that the regular armed forces were replaceable in place of Rakkhi Bahini. Arms transfer issue was played a role behind the coup of 15 August (Jahan 2000).

In February 1974, the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat negotiating rapprochement between Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Zulfiker All Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan offered to grant 30 T-54 Russian tanks to the Bangladesh Army. Sheikh Mujib unwillingly accepted the offer. The arrival of the tanks in late 1974 and early 1975 tilted the balance in favor of the army. Thus the conspiracy against Sheikh Mujib began.

Besides, Sheikh Mujib brought the fourth amendment to the constitution turning the country into a one-party state in the early 1975. Talukder Maniruzzaman explained this fourth amendment of the Bangladesh Constitution as Constitutional. He banned all political parties including Awami League and out of them created BAKSAL. He suspended fundamental rights, shifted the freedom of press, and made the judiciary subservient to the executive. His actions produced a serious political vacuum in the country. Before he could mobilize the people around his program, he was assassinated. Lawrence Lifschultz has suggested that the August coup, which killed Mujib and toppled his government, was an outcome of year-long conspiracy hatched. By a number of right wing Awami League leaders and some military officers with the knowledge of the CIA (Maniruzzaman 1975).

#### **4.6 The Second Intervention: Khaled Musharrof's Abortive Coup**

The first Coup on 15 August 1975 was added conflict between senior and junior officers when the seven Majors killed Sheikh Mujib without the support of their commanding officers and installed Khandker Mushtaq Ahmad as President. Mushtaq promoted Major General Ziaur Rahman, from Deputy Chief of Staff to the Chief of Staff of the Army. As the Majors continued to reside in Bangobhaban and remain outside the command of Army headquarters, some senior officers led by Brigadier Khaled Musharrof staged a counter-coup on 3 November 1975 and removed Mustaque from the Presidency and arrested Ziaur Rahman. Khaled first forced Moshtaque to promote him to the rank of Major General and appoint him as the Chief of Staff in place of Ziaur Rahman and the process took some time. But before handing over power, the regime killed four leading Awami Leaguers- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Monsur Ali and Kamruzzaman inside the Dhaka prison. Consequently, the lower ranks in Dhaka cantonment along with the Biplobi Gonobahini (People's Revolutionary Army), a leftist group within the armed forces led by retired Col. Abu Taher and the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) engineered a

soldier's mutiny on 7 November and restored Ziaur Rahman to his former position from his house arrest (Ahamed 1995).

#### **4.7 The 1975 Army Uprising: Emergence of Ziaur Rahman**

Mosharrofs coup was short lived and he was killed in the mutiny. However, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Justice A. M. Sayeem, who was earlier appointed by Khaled Musharrof continued as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA). And Ziaur Rahman as Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator (DCMLA) remained in the background of the power as a strongman. After a week, a new set of martial law regulations was promulgated stipulating death sentence to future mutineer. Parliament was dissolved and political parties and civil and political rights were suppressed under martial law. Taher and JSD leaders were arrested.

Through the soldier's revolution on 7 November 1975 Major General Ziaur Rahman emerged as the military strongman of the regime. For almost a year he ruled from behind the scene as one of the Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrators (DCMLA). Bangladesh went through a number of coup d'états in 1975. First, the "constitutional coup" the fourth amendment was brought to the Constitution by Sheikh Mujib on 25 January. Second, the coup of "Majors" on 15 August, in which Sheikh Mujib was assassinated and Khondkar Mushtaq Ahmed was brought to power. Third, the coup of Khaled Musharrof on 3 November in which Mushtaq was toppled from power and Justice Sayeem was managed to ascend the throne and finally the army uprising on 7 November in which Musharrof was killed and General Zia was installed as the de facto leader of the military regime (Ahamed 1988). So, the changing events in 1975 mark the year as the year of coup d'états in Bangladesh politics.

As Col. Taher and the leftists group within the armed forces wanted to have Zia as the leader of the regime. Similarly, Zia was acceptable to the rightists. Zia was acceptable to both the groups because of his popularity with the rank and file in soldiers. This acceptability to the left and to the right was one of Zia's major assets. But it was also a problem. He had to continuously balance the pressure exerted by his left and right constituencies. Eventually, 'the participants' in the 1971 war were to close the left and .repatriates to the right. The Gonobahini, leftist group of the armed forces led by Col. Taher, pressed Zia to accept its twelve-point demands, which called for the establishment of "an exploitation free society under the leadership of a classless army,



which would be the inseparable part of our production system” (Khan 1984: 22). But Zia’s stand was mighty and against the classless army. He strongly refused to go along with the Gono Bahini and its twelve-point demands. Taher was later tried in military court and sentenced to death. On the other hand, the identity crisis of the citizens brought Zia under pressure from the rightist forces. After rejecting Taher and his revolutionary cause and in the face of rightist pressure, Ziaur Rahman tried to curve out a centrist position for himself. He initiated to build a majority coalition of support behind the regime (Khan 1984).

#### **4.8 Political Development under Zia**

Zia proved to be a leader with insight, imagination and initiative with popularity. He understood the need for primacy of politics over arms. He could also see that the greatest obstacle to the establishment of a stable civilian political system was the non-professional, politicized and divided army. The feuding factions within the army were inclined to make unpredictable raid on government. Zia, therefore, tried to foster unity and professional pride in the armed forces through higher pay, improved training and adequate supplies of arms and ammunition. During the last budget of Sheikh Mujib in 1974-75, the allocation for defence had been approximately 29% of the budget. Second, Zia integrated the Rakkhi Bahini with the military and placed it under the military’s chain of command and accommodated H.M.Ershad, a repatriated officer, as Deputy Chief over the claims of Mukti Bahini officers. Simultaneously, he began to reconstruct the country’s political structure (Lifschultz 1979).

First, he advocated reconciliation between the pro-liberation and anti-liberation forces in all sectors of Bangladesh society. He expressed a linguistic-territorial-Islamic nationalism, which he called Bangladeshi nationalism, in place of the linguistic-territorial-secular nationalism, the Bengali nationalism profounded by Sheikh Mujib. As it was felt that recognition of Islam was necessary to counteract Indian influence. In addition, the regime repealed the Collaborator’s Order of 1972 and released from the prison about 20,000 thousand people held as well as convicted under the Collaborator’s Act. It also lifted the ban on religion based parties and rehabilitated the Islamist political parties. Thus the rightist, pro-Islamic and anti-Indian forces became a major support base for the regime (Ahamed 1988).

Zia brought various political groups under a Nationalist Front, which made his platform of national reconciliation. He initiated the Bangladeshi nationalism, a problem-solving approach in the economic field. He then restored electoral politics and won the Presidential elections held on 3 June 1978 by defeating the Awami League candidate convincingly. Zia soon transformed the Nationalist Front into a political party called the Bangladesh nationalist Party (BNP), which won a large majority in the National Assembly elections of February 1979.

#### **4.9 The Third Intervention: Fall of Zia**

Left wing and anti-repatriated factions in the army remained dissatisfied with the rapprochement process of Zia's regime. Their continuing dissent was reflected in about twenty attempted coups against Zia's government. Finally a group of Freedom Fighting officers led by Major general M. A. Monzur assassinated Zia in Chittagong on 30 May 1981 in a surprise attack similar to the one in which Mujib had been killed. The army's Chief of Staff at Dhaka and BNP leaders, however, encouraged Vice-president Abdus Sattar to become acting President. Sattar took the charge and arranged a presidential election in November 1981 in which, as the BNP's nominee, he duly won. But Major General Ershad Chief of Staff, within two weeks of the presidential elections, in a press conference demanded the constitutional Role of the Military in Bangladesh and demanded political role for the army (Jahan 2000).

President Sattar initially rejected this demand and had said that the primary role of the army would be to defend the frontiers of the country and that they would stay in barracks without any political role. But under pressure from the military group Sattar finally agreed to set up a National Security Council (NSC) with the President, Vice-president, Prime Minister and the three services Chiefs as member of the council. But the NSC however, did not satisfy the army and brought President Sattar under severe pressure from the rightist group, which finally forced Sattar to hand over power to H.M.Ershad, Chief of Army.

#### **4.10 The Fourth Intervention: Military Regime of General Ershad**

In the fine morning of March 24, 1982 Ershad seized power from an elected President M.A.Sattar in a bloodless coup. He declared martial law, suspended the Constitution, dismissed Sattar and his cabinet, dissolved parliament and became the Chief Martial Law Administrator with the navy and air chiefs as his deputy. Ershad ruled the country, almost nine years, up to

November 1990. Though force of events led Zia to power in 1975, but design played the major part in the seizure of power by Lt. General Ershad. By 1982, the developments in the Bangladesh Army reached a watershed<sup>51</sup>. Each of the twenty unsuccessful coups during the rule of President Ziaur Rahman had been followed by severe reprisals resulting in the death and dismissal of suspected dissidents (Ahmed 1999).

Zia was the victim of such last coup staged by the dissident officers of the freedom fighters' group within the armed forces in Chittagong. It mobilized the closely-knit repatriated officers group in the army led by Lt. General Ershad to seize political power. Like all other military dictators Ershad's first strategy was to nurse his constituency and to keep the armed forces satisfied. The defence budget increased on average by 18 percent over the period while total yearly budget increased by 14 percent. Indeed, the pay and perquisites of army personnel were increased so much that the real wages of the officers and privates were nearly double the real income of corresponding civilian positions. A good number of civilian posts of the government were taken over by the military officers. Of 22 large corporations, 14 were headed by serving or retired members of the armed forces and of 48 heads of missions abroad, one third were drawn from the defence forces (Ahmed 1999).

The strength of the armed forces was increased from 60,000 in 1975-76 to 101,500 in 1988-89. Besides, about 40 percent of his successive councils of Ministers are drawn from the armed services. More importantly, senior military officers act as a 'super cabinet' for Ershad who used to discuss all important policy measures with them.

#### **4.11 The 1990 Mass Upheaval-The Fall of Ershad: A Military Dictator**

Ershad's government came into sharp collision with politically important sector of the civil society. That very group of lawyers led by the Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Associations protested against the decentralization process of judiciary adopted by the regime. On 8 June 1982 Ershad, as chief martial law administrator, established permanent benches of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court at Dhaka, Comilla, Rangpur, Jessore, Barisal, Chittagong and Syllhet. The purpose, as stated by Ershad, was to bring justice at the doorstep of the rural people. The lawyers could easily see that the move was an attempt to disperse the lawyers all over the country and so reduce their political influence. The Lawyers strongly protested by boycotting the

sessions of the Supreme Court for some time. Later the lawyers limited their boycott to the Court of the Chief Justice M. A. Munim because of his collaboration with the president in establishing the permanent benches of the High Court outside Dhaka. The boycott continued until the Chief Justice Munim retired. The lawyers' united movement against the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution centering the decentralization issue of judiciary brought the regime under pressure covert and overt. It was further fomented, when the appellate Division of the Supreme Court on 2 September 1989 declared the amendment of Article 100 ultravires the constitution and to be void (Halim 2016). Thus the Bar Association of the Supreme Court continued to demand the resignation of Ershad through seminars, conferences and meetings.

Last of all, in the 1990 mass upheaval when thousands of people were in the streets of Dhaka demanding the resignation of Ershad on 4 December 1990, the seniors army officers led by Lieutenant General Nooruddin Khan, who succeeded Lt. General Atiqur Rahman in August 1990 decided in a meeting that the army could not support Ershad as President anymore. Accordingly, Ershad had no other alternative but to hand over power to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on 6 December 1990 a consensus-candidate was given a mandate by all opposition political parties to hold free and fair elections of the Jatiya Sangsad within three months of his assuming office. Thus the civil society prevailed once again over the armed forces of the state.

#### **4.12 Khaleda Zia's Regime: Civilian Rule**

The caretaker government headed by Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed held the free and fair elections of the Jatiya Sangsad on 27 February 1991. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) led by Khaleda Zia emerged as the winner with 140 seats, followed by the Awami League (AL) with 88 seats, Jatiya Party with 35 seats and the Jamaat-i-Islami with 18 seats in the parliament. With the support of the Jamaat, the BNP formed the government. The majority of the members of the Jatiya Sangsad belonging to both AL and BNP were also in favor of a parliamentary system of government (Jahan 2000). The supporters of the parliamentary form of government argued that under the extant constitution the president was an all-powerful executive without any accountability to the people.

The council of minister was only to aid and advice the president. As a result, the elected president tended to degenerate into an autocrat, and created a crisis situation. A supporter of the presidential form of government, Khaleda Zia dragged her feet on the issue and ultimately decided for a parliamentary system. The Jatiya Sangsad voted unanimously for the introduction of a parliamentary system on 7 August 1991. Khaleda Zia took oath of office as Prime Minister under the amended constitution on 19 September 1991 and marked the Jatiya Sangsad would be a symbol of our collective wisdom. Maniruzzaman pointed out that by the end of 1990, the armed forces had been virtually defeated by the mass upheaval, which put the power to the Jatiya Sangsad (Maniruzzaman 1995). It would require a hotheaded general to drive his tank through this Jatiya Sangsad Building.

Khaled Zia's regime faced it prolonged confrontation between the BNP headed by Khaled Zia herself and the AL led by Sheikh Hasina. It reached a crisis point with the voterless election of February 1996. Finally, the civil society groups and even the members of the civil bureaucracy came out in favor of an election under a neutral caretaker government. Khaleda Zia, who is amenable to reasonable argument and capable of taking tough decision, however, acceded to the demands. The newparliament dubiously elected in mid February 1996 met only once to pass a constitutional amendment providing for future parliamentary elections under a neutral caretaker government. The Jatiya Sangsad was dissolved again. Khaleda Zia resigned and handed over power to a caretaker government headed by Justice Md Habibur Rahman, a former chief Justice. Both Khaleda and Hasina, of course, tried to project the final outcome of the crisis as victories of their respective stands. Hasina argued that by forcing Khaleda Zia to accept the issue of caretaker government she strengthened the democratization process. Khaleda, on the other hand, posited that she saved democracy by following a constitutional process of passing a constitutional amendment to introduce a provision of general elections under a neutral caretaker government (Rabindranath 2010).

#### **4.13 The Abortive 1996 May Coup Attempt**

The caretaker government headed by Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman was then taking preparation for conducting general elections. The Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Abu Saleh Muhammad Nasim, instead of implementing the order of the President, mobilized a section of the members of-the armed forces loyal to him against the order and directed them on

20 May 1996 to march towards Dhaka. The President's order was that two senior officers- Major General G.H. Morshed Khan, Bogra Area Commander, and Brigadier Miran Habibur Rahman, Deputy Director General of the Bangladesh Rifles, were retired from services with effect from May 18, 1996 (Schendel 2009). Troops accordingly coming from northern districts had taken up positions at Nagarbari Ghat. While another group of troops had assembled at Aricha Ghat on the other side of the river. The authorities strongly asked the troops moving out from Bogra and Mymensingh cantonments to return to their respective barracks and assured them of amnesty on quick return.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas in addressing the nation over radio and TV said two senior army officers have been retired from services under army Acts and relevant Rules and later, the army Chief ASM Nasim has been given retirement for disobeying the government order and acting in a blatantly insolent manner which is tantamount to rebellion against the government. Moreover, he has issued directives to members of armed forces loyal to him to march to Dhaka and organized them against that order. A five-member high-powered Court of Enquiry was constituted to probe the incident on May 20, 1996 in the Bangladesh army headed by a Major General on 25 May 1996 (Schendel 2009). The Court of Enquiry included four other senior army officers as its members. On the basis of the recommendations of the Court of Enquiry, seven army officers were dismissed and four others compulsorily retired from the services.

Considering the participation and role of the accused officers in the war of liberation this minimum penalty under the provision of the Army Act was awarded. The dismissed officers are: (1) Lieutenant General Abu Saleh Muhammad Nairn, Bir Bikram, Psc; (2) Major General Ainuddin, Bir Bikram, Psc; (3) Major General Golam Helal Morshed Khan, Bir Bikram, Psc; (4) Brigadier K.M.Abu Bakar, Bir Pratik, Psc; (5) Brigadier Fazlur Rahman, Psc; (6) Brigadier Md. Zillur Rahman, Psc; (7) Brigadier Shall Md. Mehbub, Psc. Meanwhile, Major General Syed Md. Ibrahim, BirPratik, Awc, Psc; Brigadier Md. Azizul Hug, Psc; Lieutenant Colonel Anisul Haq Mirdha and Major Syed Mahmud Hasan, Psc have been compulsorily retired. The dismissal and the compulsorily retirement took effect from 14 June 1996 (Ahmed 2004).

Though there was an abortive coup attempt made by Major General Md. Nasim in the transitional period, the caretaker government was able to hold a free and fair election to parliament. In the June 1996 general election, Bangladesh Awami League (AL) came out as the

winner with 146 seats. Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) won 116 seats and the Jatiya Party (JP) 32 seats. The Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh won three seats, Jatiya Samajtantric (socialist) Dal won 1 seat, Islami Oikkio Jote 1 seat and Independent 1 seat (Halim 2016).

#### **4.14 Sheikh Hasina's Regime: Continuity of Civilian Rule**

Bangladesh Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina won single majority with 146 seats in the Parliament. With the support of the Jatiya Party, Awami League formed the government on 23 June 1996. To win the election, AL had to gain the trust and support of the dominant groups, e.g., the civil bureaucracy, the military and the business community. Two significant achievements of the Hasina government were the successful negotiated settlement of two long-standing disputes. In December 1996, a thirty-year Ganges water sharing treaty was signed with India. Second, in December 1997, a peace accord was signed with the rebels in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Moudud 2002). But it is a matter of great regret that at the dawn of the new Millennium, Bangladesh was again faced with a serious political crisis. The two major political parties-AL and BNP-failed to settle their differences through dialogue and negotiations and resorted to the tactics of agitational politics of the street along with frequent strikes. In the meantime, Bangladesh has been experienced enough from different form of government of different regimes during the last three decades. So, these periods have been witnessed a turbulent political scene and it had a far reaching consequences on civil military relations in Bangladesh.

#### **4.15 Khaleda Zia in Power (2001-2006) and the Growing Distortion of Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh has witnessed a number of serious internal security issues from 2001-2006. The internal politics, Awami League's constant criticism on BNP government and ruling regimes failure to rise up to the expectations of commoners etc. put the government in trouble. There was no proper following of constitutional procedures while dealing with civil military relations in the country. It created a rift between civilian system and military's activities. The BNP's problems could be directly traced to the rapid increase in extremist violence in the country ever since Khaleda returned to power in October 2001. Ironically, it was on a promise of rolling back deteriorating law and order that the BNP-led coalition won a huge mandate in the 2001 elections, but military operations, such as Clean Heart and Spider Web and the formation of Rapid Action

Battalion were only partially successful. The larger problem of religious extremism went unchecked. For long the ruling coalition was in a denial mode, thus aggravating the problem. The government dismissed Islamic militancy as a conspiracy and an orchestrated campaign by some vested quarters and the creation of some newspapers. Islamic extremist violence, which began sporadically in 1999, peaked in 2004-2005. Between 1999 and December 2005, there were over 33 major bomb blasts, most of them attributed to militant groups or individuals (Syed Saad 2007).

Official investigations were either not completed or yielded no result or led to no arrests. Attacks targeted at political leaders included the one on the Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina Wajid in August 2004 at a party rally, which killed twenty persons, including senior Awami League leader Ivy Rahman, and the assassination in January 2005 of S.A.M.S. Kibria, senior Awami League leader and former finance minister. Particularly sensational were the nationwide simultaneous bomb blasts on 17 August 2005, numbering over 300. Arguably, the unstable political conditions have benefited the increasingly influential Islamist fringe, led by legitimate governing parties like the Jama'at but extending to the violently militant Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) and the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) (Syed Saad 2007).

It was the concerted international pressure that jolted the government into action. Their expression of concern over the deterioration of the governance situation in Bangladesh, especially the situation of law and order, political violence including recent bombings, and the climate of impunity prompted the government to ban the JMB and JMJB. The immediate arrest of Bangla Bhai and Shaikh Abdur Rahman, leaders of JMJB and JMB respectively led Khaleda Zia on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2006 to declare Bangladesh as a terrorism-free nation. The influence of religion has been palpable and conservative elements found the contrived system convenient to push their narrow agenda aggressively. Investigations had revealed that the coalition members, specifically Jamaa't cadres, were contributing funds to the JMB. Such reports and the failure of the government to decisively disengage from its coalition partners painted the BNP as willing partner if not a collaborator in extremist violence. The terror attacks had also precipitated a deep crisis and divisions within the BNP. A number of disgruntled BNP leaders publicly accused the ruling coalition of having links with religious extremists (Halim 2016).



The government made only very limited and cursory attempts to investigate and unearth the underground terror links. Its lack of serious action invoked severe criticism that underground terrorist groups have been cultivated and sheltered by those in power. Mounting domestic and international pressure resulted in cosmetic changes and some quick high-profile arrests but Bangladeshi intelligence officials believe that the arrests are unlikely to undermine the militant groups entirely. Many Bangladeshis believe that a series of highly publicised mass surrenders of suspects were more political theatre than a genuine end to a reign of terror. The opposition also has its share of woes. In its obsession to unseat the Khaleda government, the Awami League had forged an unwieldy alliance with various opposition parties.

The result was that the fourteen-party coalition under Sheikh Hasina was expanded to nineteen parties, including two factions of Islami Oikya Jote led by Mizbahur Rahman Choudhury and Allama Azizul Haque, along with the Islamic Front of Bangladesh. In the process, Hasina made some odd and controversial choices. The Khaleda government's refusal to drop corruption charges against him induced former President and jatiya Party leader General Ershad to forge an alliance with the Awami League-led opposition coalition. Likewise, despite its secular orientation, Hasina forged a partnership with Khilafat Majlish Bangladesh, signing an agreement that if voted to power her government was committed to the introduction of Sharia (Hossain 2009).

On 14 May, 2004 the four-party coalition government headed by Khaleda Zia of the BNP passed the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution, increasing the retirement age of Supreme Court judges from 65 to 67 years. This in practice meant that Justice K.M. Hasan would become head of the caretaker government when the current government demitted office. The Justice would continue his term and Justice K.M. Hasan would be the last outgoing Chief Justice to head the caretaker government. Justice Hasan had been a member of the BNP. The opposition accused the government of partisanship and facilitating the nomination of its former member to this neutral post (Hossain 2009). Widespread public disapproval and criticism of the opposition resulted in Justice Hasan declining to head the caretaker government.

Pre-empting the functioning of the neutral caretaker government, as early as in 2005 the BNP-led coalition had filled the local administration with its members and supporters. To enhance its electoral chances, scores of election officers at district and Upazila levels were recruited from

amongst the BNP and its coalition supporters. According to various media reports the ruling coalition filled over 700 posts with those affiliated with their parties. These appointments might be crucial for ensuring the victory of the BNP-led coalition, even under a neutral administration.

#### **4. 16 Military-backed Caretaker Government (2007-2008)**

Just after the completion of Khaleda Zia's tenure as prime minister in October 2006, Bangladesh has been plunged into a series of political crises. Khaleda undermined the office of prime minister through her appointment of a caretaker government of partisans. The President, Iajuddin Ahmed, in his turn usurped the powers of the caretaker government. Just days before elections to the ninth Jatiya Sangsad emergency was introduced in the country on 11 January, 2007. This was followed by the President surrendering his dual responsibility, which paved the way for the formation of the second caretaker government headed by Fakhruddin Ahmed. The constitutional requirement that internal emergency has to be ratified within 120 days of declaration, that is by 12 May, will not be met because parliament stands dissolved and elections are not in sight (Rabindranath 2010). These periods were witnessed the erosion of some principal institutions of democracy, primary among them the office of President, Chief Advisor to the caretaker government, Election Commission, parliament, political parties and the civil military relations.

There were also serious differences over the conduct of elections for the eighth Jatiya Sangsad, originally due in January 2007. Given the obvious manipulation of the political system by the ruling alliance, the Awami League-led opposition parties were demanding: Reconstitution of the Election Commission, Preparation of a faultless voter list, and Ensuring of an environment congenial to the conduct of a free and fair election.

The Awami League has been demanding reforms in electoral laws and made its participation in the 2007 elections conditional upon the fulfilment of its demands. As it has been the trend in Bangladesh, various extra-constitutional means were adopted by the opposition as they were unable to hold dialogue within the Jatiya Sangsad. This resulted in Prime Minister Khaleda Zia suggesting the formation of a committee to discuss the reform proposals outside parliament. Coalition compulsions resulted in the BNP naming members of the religious parties to this committee. This was unacceptable to the opposition. For long, the Awami League has blamed the religious allies of the BNP for the increasing number of terror attacks and undermining the

political process. Objecting to the inclusion of Jama'at to the committee, the Awami League stepped up its agitation programmes, including a series of non-stop hartals. In the ensuing violence in Dhaka and elsewhere in Bangladesh, in the clashes with police some prominent Awami League leaders, such as Saber Hossain Choudhury and Asaduzzaman Nur, were severely injured (Hossain 2009).

If initially there was no manifestation of popular displeasure against some of the unprecedented moves by the interim government it was merely a reflection of the people's disappointment with their mainstream leadership. But the caretaker government is a team of appointed technocrats. The constitution restricts their scope to holding free and fair elections within three months but more than five months after Khaleda Zia demitted office Bangladesh does not have an election schedule. By undertaking revision of the voters' list it has postponed elections indefinitely. This political crisis has undermined various political institutions in the country. The current situation would necessitate the two main political parties modifying or even abandoning some of their erstwhile positions. For example, Khaleda Zia's son Tarique looks likely to be marginalised within the BNP (Islam 2009). The Awami League had to pull out of its last-minute alliance with Khilafat Majlish Bangladesh. The caretaker government has initiated actions against both the BNP and the Awami League to expose their corruption. Popular endorsement of this initiative has restrained rival politicians from taking to the streets.

The year 2006 exposed the fragility of Bangladesh democracy. It took the country nearly two months of intense street protests to bring about a duly constituted and recognised caretaker government. Widespread public protests also resulted in the President relinquishing his post as chief of the caretaker government. Likewise, only under popular protest and threat of personal boycott did the controversial CEC leave office. At the same time, even four months after the resignation of the Khaleda government there are no signs of an early election. The newly constituted Election Commission has started the arduous task of revision of the voter list, without any tentative date of completion. Under the constitution, the emergency would have to be ratified by parliament within 120 days or it lapses (Khan 2008). This in practical terms means that the new Jatiya Sangsad would have to be constituted before 10 May 2007. With no definite election dates, a question mark hangs over the duration and legality of the emergency regulations. By all accounts, the political situation under a caretaker government is at odds with the Constitution.

The military is implementing the emergency. At the same time, except the political parties, the wider public including the media appear to have endorsed this non-political climate.

#### **4.17 Sheikh Hasina back to Power: Civil Military Relations in the Ninth Parliament (2009-2013)**

In December, 2008, following two years of a military-backed caretaker government, the Awami League (AL) secured a landslide victory with 229 of 300 votes in parliament and AL-led alliance achieved 262 seats. The election was widely acknowledged to be the fairest election in the country's history and the AL had its 15 pages 'Charter for Change' as its election manifesto with avowed commitment of bringing positive changes to all institutions, politics and culture etc. in the country (Halim 2016). However, after forming the government the Awami League started taking various decisions in parliament and outside unilaterally and without any participation of the opposition. No fruitful step was taken by the Government or the Awami League to take back BNP, the main opposition into parliament to practice and develop participatory democracy. The Awami League did not take any lesson from the experience of the two-year army-caretaker government although there were huge expectations from common people that incidents of putting both Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia in prison, torturing and sending abroad two sons of Khaleda Zia, putting into imprisonment hundreds of political leaders for corruption charges would lead the Awami League to bring positive changes into the institutions of democracy and governance (Halim 2016). However, to the utter dismay of majority people the Awami League Government did not bring any positive changes to the institutionalization of democracy; it rather destroyed those built up by the army-backed caretaker government.

#### **4.18 Bangladesh Army Mutiny of 2009 and Civil Military Relations**

On 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2009, Bangladesh witnessed a heavy combat in the military headquarters of Dhaka and it had spread to other military units in the country. At the very first day, mutiny killed 50 soldiers as a result of the continuous fighting, including senior commanders of the Bangladesh Rifles. Once the battle started, lower-ranking soldiers took some of the higher ranking officers as hostage. They also took control of some of the public conveniences including a shopping mall near soldiers Dhaka barracks. On second day of the rebellion, the mutiny had spread across the

country and as a result there were the involvements of more military barracks throughout Bangladesh (Rabindranath 2010).

As the hours passed, mutiny spread to other parts of the country and the mutineers fought in the Teknaf region and forced the unit commander to flee. Later, a fight erupted at Bangladesh Rifle bases in Cox Bazar, Chittagong, Naikhongchari, Sylhet, Rajshahi and Naogaon. As per the reports BDR took control of 12 of the 64 border districts. The civilian system was also unable to respond and sent armored units of the army to tackle the situation, later, the rebels surrendered to the forces. But it resulted in the death of 148 people, most of them are military officers. In October, 2012, a military court found 723 of the border guards of the former Bangladeshi Rifles (BDR) guilty of joining and leading the mutiny, and imposed jail sentences on the mutineers. Dhaka's Metropolitan Sessions Court Judge Md Akhtaruzzaman also sentenced 157 others, mostly border guards, to life in prison while 271 people were acquitted. The influential military was not happy over the response of the government, which did not allow troops to attack the border guards' headquarters in Dhaka where military commanders were killed (Khan 2010). Even the Human rights activists have criticised Bangladesh for such a mass trial, saying it will not ensure justice.

Thinkers cited two main reasons for the revolt; primarily, soldiers' issues of pay and living conditions and secondly, the mutiny could be highly politically motivated to destabilize the politically established system. It was a fact that BDR, one of the biggest military outfits which protect its long border, had been provided with very meager salary and working conditions. Most of the soldiers are from socially and economically marginalized areas. A high level of disturbance and dissatisfaction of soldiers made them to rebel against the government. At the same time, it was also reported that the mutiny was aimed to destabilize the already elected government in power. The year 2009 was a period which was characterized by peaceful transfer of power from caretaker to newly elected government. But the opposition rejected the election result on the ground that it was undemocratic where a huge chunk of population did not participate in election.

Here, one could see BDR mutiny was the result of either Bangladesh government's incapability to provide better material facilities to the serving unit or a political plot or conspiracy to disdain already elected Sheikh Hasina's government which came to power just two months before the

mutiny. Whatever be the reasons, the incident could be seen as a scratch in country's bettering civil military relations. Post 2009 Bangladesh saw the trial of culprits and attempts to regain civilian supremacy on military or balanced civil military relations in Bangladesh. Still, many scholars opined that Bangladesh seems vulnerable to military coups and mutinies.

#### **4.19 Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted some of the major shifts and changes happened in the sweet and sour relations of civil military in Bangladesh. From 1971 to 2012, the Bangladesh political system has seen 9 different phases in civil military relations. Though there were civilian autocracies, parliamentary democracy, military autocracy and even one party authoritarian political set ups, all affected civil military relations badly. It was all because of two relevant factors in Bangladesh politics; factionalism and politicization. Irrespective of any forms of governance, civil-military relations in this country was hampered till a point of period. This gives the impression that either civilian or military power's manoeuvres aggravated the army's structural instability born of the Liberation war heritage. Various regimes, particularly military, have degraded, destabilized and undemocratized civil military relations in Bangladesh. Although operating based on corruption which seriously and deeply hampered the institution, General Ershad's period pressurized the military to go back to its conventional tasks, protecting the country from external aggression. But before him, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's soft authoritarian rule and his attempt to silence his opponents by forming a new para military force apart from main military force actually triggered a bad civil military flow.

Ziaur Rahman was no exception in maintaining military autocracy in the country though he wanted to develop a professional military highly obedient to the civilian system. Till 1991, Bangladesh was going through politically turbulent stages which had destabilize and imbalance the just born civil military establishments. This period was replaced by the introduction of democracy and the return of civilians to power in 1991. At the same time, the nation witnessed politicized state system and triggered permanent confrontational politics between the two main parties and threatened the stability of civil-military relations. Even after 1991, there were several incidences that reveal the politicized military and using military for political purposes. Khaleda Zia's regime from 2001-2006 had also again put the civil military relations in trouble. She was blamed for using army for taking revenge on her political opponents.

After 2006, Bangladesh has gone again back to military backed caretaker government. In terms of civil military relations, this period can be marked as golden era. The failure to reach a consensus between the AL and the BNP, President Iajuddin cancelled the election and imposed a state of emergency. A caretaker government was appointed under the leadership of Fakhruddin and he sought help from the military which established a National Coordination Committee against Crime and Corruption headed by the 9th Infantry Division's General Officer Commanding (GOC), Major General Masud Uddin Chowdhury and which drafts in all seven GOCs as members. It was remarkably noted that both caretaker government and military were never shown any hesitance to transfer power to the newly elected government. As a matter of fact, civil military relations seemed to be improved these days. It was carried and maintained during the 9<sup>th</sup> political regime under Sheikh Hasina. To be precise, though alternate political parties have been manipulating the army's hierarchy and distorting its prestige while re-awakening its political factions, the military actually showed its commitment towards democratic principles and its eagerness to engage in commercial enterprises.

## **Chapter V**

### **Domestic Political Situations and Civil Military Relations**



## Chapter V

### Domestic Political Situations and Civil Military Relations

#### 5.1 Prelude

Civil-military relations in Bangladesh have been displaying several characteristics from 1971 – 2013. Majority of the scholars on civil military relations attempt to study developing and third world countries' political developments and processes by using different sticks. The balanced or imbalanced relations between civilian leaders and military have always been judged on the basis of political culture of that particular state. Here, in the context of Bangladesh, scholars are not wrong and what is addition is political and military leader's failure to rise up to the hopes and aspirations of people. That was why there was attempt by military with the support of commoners to minus top two leaders of Bangladeshi state. It is assumed that Bangladesh has inherited a military which becomes highly vulnerable to over politicization. But the question always strikes everyone would be its lack of professionalism and structural inequalities inside. But here in this chapter, an attempt has been made to look at the poor political move of two major parties in the country to use military for their wills. It even made the morale of army down and sometimes, army has to step out of its provisional duties and consolidate democracy.

Moreover, this chapter attempts to points out several features which are affecting Civil-Military relations in Bangladesh. The political experiences of the county reveal that factionalism and politicization are two major factors which constantly drag civil military relations into a bad swing and it has adverse impacts on Bangladesh's developmental agenda too. It shows how they adversely affected and hampered the institutionalization of civil-military relations. It throws light on the fact that the political power holders and excessive role of military personnel in politics aggravated the army's structural instability. The chapter argues that during the 1980 military rule, the military's professionalism, discipline and the institutionalization of the armed forces' role were promoted and encouraged the main thesis points to the return of civilians to power in 1991. At the same time, the same period reintroduced partisan politics and cleavages into the army and threatened the stability of civil-military relations. Whatever be the form of government were in power, the history of civil military relations in Bangladesh reveal that there was no serious follow up and executive steps to democratize the civil military relations.

## **5.2 History of Politicized Military and Over Politicisation of Civilian System**

An in depth scrutiny of the historical developments in Bangladesh's politicization of civil military relations is necessary. The role of the legacy and knowledge of governance of the British Raj and supreme faith in Islam and its ethics were the two major instruments downplayed by the politicians to unify the army during the Pakistan period. In this context, rising aspirations of people in East Pakistan which led to secessionist movement on linguistic basis provided volatile ground within the polity of two wings of Pakistan. Nevertheless, through a neutral understanding of the above said two elements, Bangladesh army presents a juxtaposing scenario. In a significant manner, Bangladesh army is the outcome of the liberation war of 1971, unlike erstwhile West Pakistan which reflects its inheritance of the colonial legacy. The people behind the struggle for independence belonged to a heterogeneous mix of members of Marxist parties, rebel officers, militia formed by nationalist parties, their cadres were divided into wide array of revolutionary cells and factions on political basis. In its infancy stage Bangladesh faced with an anxious situation, whereas its military elite was not inducted into the power structure, somewhat it was ideologically contested (Halim 2016).

After Bangladesh was formed, People associated with the freedom struggle became major beneficiaries, as they were conferred with honours, promotions, and various privileges. On the other side, the repatriated officers who were forced to stay in West Pakistan with the onset of the liberation war were denied legal and political favors, thus the struggle for freedom itself became a reason for inequalities and fractures within its ranks. Aftermath of the assassination of Mujibur Rahman in the year 1975, endowed with an opportunity to the repatriated Bengali officers to strengthen their initial position, by discarding the partisans of the former from key position as functionaries in the polity. In this manner, competition in the political movement and revenge games set the stage for martial rulers like General Ziaur Rahman (1975-81) and Hussain Muhammad Ershad (1982-1990) to form their support basis and legitimacy to their governments (Rahman 1999).

There are three key questions posed by various scholars, which are quiet relevant in generating knowledge base on the superfluous role played by the military in the affairs of political interests of the state. These three questions are on the process and outcomes of the army building; second, analyses the primary stage by focusing on the influential role of politics, and degree of

factionalism in the structures and organisation of the army; third, provides a close scrutiny on the professionalism exerted by army, its intensity in the exercise of political power, and the process of democratization. From a basic introduction, these three central questions require a holistic understanding at different levels.

During British colonial rule, the proportion of Bengalis in the British Indian Army was miniscule. Even after independence in 1947, this trend was visible by the fact that among the entire Pakistan's armed force strength, its Eastern Wing soldiers accounted only to 1% (Islam 2002: 363). The data available on the subsequent years shows that, in the year 1948 total number of fresh recruits stood at 2,795, out of which 87 Bengalis were there (Islam 2002: 366). In the year 1965, when India-Pakistan war broke out, the percentage of Bengalis in Army was 5%, 15% in Navy, and 16% in Air force. The Pakistan military strength in 1970 was 412, 000, in which Bengali professional fighters could reach 34,000 with around 300 holding the officer rank, including not more than one Major-General (Ahamed 1988: 51-52; Islam: 2002: 369).

From a geographical point of view, both eastern and western wings of Pakistan were separated by 2,000km of the Indian landmass. Administration of the country was divided actually into two wings in the year 1955: in which 55.4% were Bengali population geographically located in Eastern Wing, and the Western wing comprised of 44.6% of the total population. Retrospection of the population strength of the Bengalis who were in majority, but restricted to a mere 9% of its representation of soldiers and various ranks of officers in army, as this was quiet visible in the entire 24 years of its association with West Pakistan. This in fact set the ground firm for resentment and sense of irritation among Bengali soldiers against the Western wing. Moreover in subsequent years, the first martial ruler General Ayub Khan's policies strengthened the initial level of resentment because he brought in place reforms and quotas for promotions which eventually turned non-beneficial for Bengalis as they were discarded in upward mobility in the service. To add more General Ayub Khan was of the opinion that Bengalis were oppressed race having no martial features (Khan 1967: 187).

From a strategic perspective, dominating western wing of Pakistan left its Eastern wing entirely defence less, even in likelihood of any Indian misadventure. The moves adopted by strategic circles of Pakistan in the Indo-Pak war of 1965 could not dispel such fear. Moreover the defence strategy to engage India in its Western front led to concentration of forces to that part only, and a

possible attack on Indian territories along with Kashmir of any sort of invasion of East Pakistan was not adequate guarantee of security and protection for Bengalis in the Eastern wing (Khan 1967). In sum, Bengali military's foremost threats were two in number: first its geographical vulnerability to India as the latter locked eastern wing on its three sides, and the continuous ignorance of the province by Islamabad.

Amid above mentioned vulnerabilities felt by Eastern Wing of Pakistan, aspirations and demand for greater autonomy led to the rise of a movement initiated by the leadership of Mujib and his political party Awami League, which started drawing momentum right from the middle of 1950s. Fissures within the polity of Pakistan became visible in 1970, when Mujib led Awami League received a landslide victory in the elections, and he was supposed to lead the next government formation, initially thwarted by the duo of army and Western front's political parties as they could never transfer the command and control of the government to an assembly dominated by East wing Pakistanis of Bengali origin (Schendel 2009). The subsequent events which changed the course of history were the Western Pakistan led crackdown on major cities of East Pakistan, arrests of Bengali newly elected representatives, top leaders of Awami League party, and significant among them were the arrest of Mujib on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Many leaders of then East Pakistan crossed over to India, thus formed a constituent assembly and government in exile on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1971, and demanded the independent state of Bangladesh (Schendel 2009).

To crush East Pakistan's demand for external self determination, approximately 70,000 Pakistani soldiers were deployed to dismantle the popular movement. Among the survivors of the military crackdown were former Bengali soldiers of the regiments in East Pakistan, subsequently joined hands with pro liberation forces. Rest of the Bengali troops was under forced confinement in West Pakistan (Haq 2008). The British origin East Bengal Rifles with a total strength of 15,000 Bengali soldiers also took part in the freedom move, but the pro- Bangladesh forces were in reality civilian militias, divided or scattered (Haq 2008: 195). Those forces like regular and paramilitary were operating through a chain of command from Mujib Nagar, but militias drawn from peasants, political activists, university students reflected autonomous character in which they were not liable to anyone. There were many such partisan groups and gangs, prominent among them were Abdul Matin's East Bengal Communist Party-Marxist Leninist (EBCP-ML), or gangs such as Quader Siddiqui's, a charismatic godfather in the Tangail District (Haq 2008:

196). With reference to anti liberation forces, much significant plot to destroy the freedom movement was led by strong 30,000 cadres of Non-Bengali origin known as Razakars, with its formation in the aftermath of 1965 Indo-Pak, to counter any of India's attempts to take over East Pakistan. They remained active in crushing liberation forces along with the Pakistan army. Apart from Razakars, Islamist party like Jamaat-e-Islami's involvement with Pakistan was significant in a manner that they raised two militia organisations: Al Badr and Al Shams, whose violence perpetrated is well documented (Haq 2008: 193).

In the post liberation period, Mukti Bahini forces which comprised near to one lakh, among them a small percentage i.e around 7,000 along with rebel officers of the then Gen. Ayub or Yahya Khan's period desired to join the Bangladesh's defence services. As the large majority of liberation heroes relieved themselves of duties by entrusting the processes for nation and state building to the political leaderships (Bhattacharya 2000: 102). The years succeeding the Bangladesh formation was characterised by growing distrust between both military officials and the elected politicians of Mujibnagar, as the former had to make radical choices to protect its interests from India's interferences, which eventually generated the gulf among both (Nordlinger 1977: 21-27). Moreover during the war, they provided all encompassing support to various guerilla private forces, which was initially a strategic option to generate cooperative mechanism between soldiers and the members of the civil society (Nordlinger 1977: 28).

Popular military officers namely Taher and Jalil chose to join Mukti Bahini forces, as they could successfully survive Pakistan military led atrocities. Their leadership in the Mukti Bahini to lead as commanders of the 11<sup>th</sup> sector (also known as 4<sup>th</sup> Mukti Bahini) and 9<sup>th</sup> sector was remarkable. Apart from these two Z, S, and the K-force led by Major Ziaur Rahman, Major Shafiullah, and Major Khaled Musharraf. After Bangladesh's formation, the Mujibnagar government had divisive vested interests on both far left and its future course of relation with India. It was in this crucial phase that the civil military relations of the country were chalked down. In an attempt to a new political direction for the country, and to weed out communist elements, the cabinet formed in exile was quick to offer military ranks like Major-General and Brigadier General to 250 Provincial Assembly Members and near to 167 Members of Parliament from Awami League party (elected during the Pakistan elections in 1970) (Khan 1984: 104). Those who held higher position in the Mukti Bahini were officially lower to the military rank of

Colonel, in actual exercise of exert of power they could supersede the military professionals and the hierarchy of ranks, as they could be termed politicians acquiring position of generals. So the conflict phase was the initial stage set by the Mujibnagar government to delegate army's control and command to civilian leaderships (Maleque 2007).

Two major tensions erupted with the decisions taken by government in exile, led to widening of interests of political leaderships and soldiers in which the military elite' growing anti-India sentiments became visible, secondly there was a profound belief among the left leaning military personnel that the core of the liberation struggle rested on the strength of the guerilla units rather sole dependence on principles of any political nationalist party. In this way government's decision clearly showed the imposition of civilian supremacy over the authority of military. So the political leaderships were infact in urgency to combine the revolting mass of wide array into a single liberation army of partisan nature. Indira Gandhi's decision to provide aid the liberation war strengthened the cooperation in April 1971. One should recall that the entire territory was consequently swept by 100,000 Pakistani military and paramilitary, until it fell totally under control in August 1971, the turning point of the conflict (Schendel 2009).

India's role in the liberation was based with an aim to secure an Awami League led friendly government, this was a major reflection of Indian officers' active participation, but the interim government had a relatively weak command over military. On the flip side, was the military leaderships like Colonel Taher who was among those contested the leadership. Because Colonel Taher was instrumental in forging alliance with civilians into mobilization, his aims were to implement his course of strategies as well as imposition of pro-communist agendas in the post war scenario. The leadership of Colonel was difficult to eschew, because Comilla was under his command along with that he took the rank of Adjutant General and his wise strategy was instrumental in his battalion's successful move towards then Pakistan's Dhaka Military Headquarters. Another prominent name was Major Ziauddin, who was given the command of Dhaka Brigade. Both officers could develop a well established and organised army units and a radical army in the utmost conflict phase (Lifschultz 1979: 36, 38; Ahamed 1988: 86-87). Amid the successes of these military leaderships, factionalism, party's politics and differences between civilian and military sectors surfaced as core elements in deciding the nature of the relations between both.

### **5.3 The New Face of Army and the League State**

The new military leadership rather contesting Prime Minister Mujib's subsequent efforts to forge strategic alliance with India was in favor of promoting a professional army in a liberal manner, although the force in place had significant number of officers who were against India's interferences. For the new military leadership the issues which required urgent solution were to minimize civil military tensions and contentious matters which were sprouted during war period which led to factionalism. Amid such tensions, Mujib in his efforts to ease the situation did bring changes by the induct of groups of wide array under one umbrella of institution run by moderate liberation fighters (Ahmed 1998). The suspicion over Mukti Bahini loomed large in the understanding of Mujib, as he was having sleek knowledge about the functioning and operating division lines, meanwhile S-force's former commander General Shafiullah was promoted to hold the office of Chief of Army Staff (COAS). Whereas Khaled Musharraf was not a favourable candidate, because his name was associated being pro-Indian and General Zia ur Rahman was found to be highly ambitious and his actions in the war were deemed to be negative for differences in attitude with his higher command, so the path was clear for Shafiullah as an eligible candidate for the office (Ahmed 2004). Politicization of the army was initialized to keep the army weak as well as divided, and the government was instrumental in inducting fresh recruits from the civilian liberation participants to the post of Non-Commissioned Officers and pro-Awami League officers were granted positions in Junior Commissioned Officer ranks.

War torn country in its infancy stage brought in place future trajectories for civil military relations. Mujib and his party Awami League yearned to pool more power to concentrate all legitimate institutions under its fist. Intense degrees of factionalism within the military as an institution left itself into a spineless body, coupled with weakening of bureaucracy by the departure of the Pakistani officials, so the civilian and military bureaucracy under the newly formed regime found itself in decay. The options available to Mujib to cater his vast population was to go ahead with the process of building a partisan based civilian and military governance, in which single handedly Awami League members were offered the command of administration, thus Mujib's role as chairman of Awami League and Head of the state remained unchallenged (Schendel 2009).

In the newly formed nation-state, the nationalist mythology around Awami League rule was utilised by partisan civil and military officers, directors of state run companies, as they sworn allegiance not to the established state, nevertheless they did not shy away to link their positions in the party to earn power, legitimacy, and acquire capital. As noted by a scholar, the Awami League led domination of the political sphere has inherent intricacies because it creates a nationalist myth born out of the events of the liberation struggle and it also confines one nationalist party as the sole reason for the victory. Such tendencies were visibly reflected in the attitude of the government in exile as the way they played political manipulations on Mukti Bahini during war time (Ahmed 2004).

Apart from the glorification of the liberation fighters and their contributions, Mujib headed government had not clearly formulated or mandated the role for army in the nation-building processes. According to S. Hussain, 'this apathy was grown within civil and political society from the fact that the new state of Bangladesh apparently had no physical threat from its neighbour India', a foreign policy orientation that was not shared by the majority of the freedom fighter officers (Hussain 2003: 7).

State's resources were being exploited by agents through state run agencies, whose loyalty to the political class outnumbered their allegiance to the state. The institutional machinery was in an impoverished, embryonic as well as in a degenerative mode, which neither could achieve rationality nor bring in place a sense of legality (Hussain 2003: 8). The state stood on a parasite infected structure, whereas it significantly could not fulfill the dreams and usher them into reality of the most idealistic liberation fighters, as the vision of socio-economical and political emancipation of Bengali populace remained a mere utopia. From a more nuanced understanding we find that Awami League is basically a mass party, rather a single or monolithic organisation whose decision making structures were divided into various factions comprising leaders ranging from charismatic to traditional ones, so it could not rely on a single ideology. So the strategy adopted by Mujib was unique in a sense that he made relentless efforts to shrink the inner most circles of the ruling elite, for which he devised patron-client relations maintenance which was found to be engaged in corrupt practices.



Creation and propagation of insecurities became a regular feature to sustain the misdeeds of the autocratic regime, this entailed the requirement for heavy and regular deployments of police force and personnel of Bangladesh Rifles in the name of security related operations. The necessity of army in the country was felt by the civilian administration for the first time from the period 1972-75, due to the crisis of the ruling political regime, coupled with them were relief operations to be conducted after occurrence of natural disasters and to deal with worsening security situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The contributing factors for political instability in its early years were the prolonged violence perpetrated against the existing razakars who were found to be threat to the nation-state, serious economic instabilities, along with them underground operations of the left elements grew as a potential threat (Hussain 2003: 7).

The cleavages between military and AL has its roots in the liberation war of 1971, which has propped up many times, as the unique nature of the political structure formed after independence provided the environment for it to flourish further and send waves of damaging effects in regular intervals. As discussed earlier three major figures of the liberation war among army were Tahir Jalil and Ziauddin, they have in repeated manner accused AL's stand in the post war period in a critical manner, as the latter could not forge unity and was involved in actions like confiscating and distribution of properties of those who took refuge in India among its partisan agencies. For them another major source of resentment was the ignorance and denial of the role played by army in the struggle for freedom, as according to them, the army was instrumental in forging alliance of Bengalis from various social and economic strata of the state. After liberation, their contribution was not given due recognition and kept them out of the processes of social and economic development.

Officers associated in the war for freedom were ideologically inclined to Maoism, thus were found to have materialized guerilla warfare techniques, for them the post war period was deemed to be spent on national reconstruction by engaging soldiers in agricultural, agrarian production, irrigation skills in cooperation with the civil society, with an objective to usher the new nation state in the lines of socialism for development. Moreover, their orientation was established not on the principle of being part of the professional army in the post war period, as they did not believe in the dichotomy between government and army as an institution (Lifschultz 1979: 75-97). Defiance was cited as the reason for suspension of war time charismatic officers like

Ziauddin , Jalil, and Taher in 1972, which turned them to join in Marxist ideology based political parties of clandestine nature like the Have-nots party or Shorbohara Dol and National Socialist Party or Jatiyo Shomajtantrik Dol. These two parties drawn its members basically who had resent over the policies of AL including war veterans and students. Violent methods like terrorist acts were believed to be devised in order to challenge the corrupt practices of civilian bureaucracy and each levels of administration so as to restore social justice.

Jatiyo Rakkhi Bahini (JRB) was the brainchild of Mujib to counterbalance any attempts by the army to challenge his regime. JRB could be termed as an armed wing of the Awami League, other than its role as a law enforcement agency. Apart from reducing the threats posed by military, JRB was utilised to keep vigilance on anti AL radical elements within the party base, thus the force of AL acquired legitimate monopoly over force (Ahamed 1988: 51-54, Hakim 1998: 286). As the years went on JRB became more powerful within the state because its strength rose to 25,000 in 1975, and the target was to increase the existing figure to reach 120,000 (Ahmed 1998). To add more, Mujib spent approximately 13% of the budget earmarked for public expenditure to finance and maintain the force, as such a force loyal to his party cold have had proliferated to every district within the control of the government. Simultaneously the professional army of the country was facing shortage of the budget for its needs (Maleque 2007). Disposed military officer Taher was of the opinion that JRB's over arching fist over power indicated the existence of a police state in order to disseminate revolutionaries. Likewise Biplobi Gono Bahini (BGB, Revolutionary People's Army) became an armed wing of Jashod (Ahmed 1998). Taher was able to forge and maintain cordial relations with the military and also his former brigade, which could eventually inseminate revolutionary elements in the army. The famous 11<sup>th</sup> sector headed by Taher, its civilian members joined BGB to accomplish their revolutionary mission. Working relationship was developed between Jashod and army in such a manner that they formed a pre 1917 soviet based model organisation called as Biplobi Shoinik Shangstha (BSS, Revolutionary Military Associations), which could be utilised to launch coup d'état (Maleque 2007).

The repressive political tools designed by the authoritarian leader Mujib were far from achieving any remarkable success. His persistent denial in restructuring the army as an institution and constructing a new definition of its association with civil society were the major reason for the

unholy alliance between revolutionaries and soldiers. Army was facing crisis due to Mujib's neglect of its significance. Mujib's wise policy decision to tackle the situation became more necessary after 1973, as it was the period when army was facing tensions within its organization.

#### **5.4 Mukti Juddha and Repatriated: Growing Tensions and Its Impacts**

One of the earliest bone of contention faced by political circles of Bangladesh were its stand on Mukti Juddha and the Repatriated. The principle difference between Mukti Juddha and Mukti Bahini was that former comprised well trained and skilled army personnel who participated in the war, on the other hand Bahini represented people from all walks of life united on the pretext of freedom of Bangladesh. Formative years of Bangladesh army was incomplete due to the fact that it's half fraction of the total strength was absent as well as met with problems related to its mushrooming stage. The repatriated army personnel who did not participate in the liberation war as they were forced to stay in West Pakistan were looked upon as of dubious character, moreover their strength comprised 28,000 soldiers and 1,100 officers, who were believed to be of potential threat by the AL regime under Mujib (Hussain 2003:6), as they posed more tensions than the freedom fighter did. The underlying reason for such inculcation of fear was that, repatriated were trained under erstwhile West Pakistan which had a legacy of bitter relations with elected politicians or precisely with the democratic process and were prone to wage coup (Hussain 2003).

From the part of Mujib, the contention and dilemma loomed large over repatriated army personnel due to the sustained delay in the period between end of civil war and the actual repatriation process which commenced in 1973. So this gap was utilised by Mujib government to establish the roots of JRB or more precisely the band of loyalist soldiers. As far as noted by one scholar, the initial reason for the rift between repatriated and the government was strictly materialistic, as Mujib government was quick to reward freedom fighters with privileges which repatriated were entitled to (Ahmed 1988: 51). This can be easily understood by the fact that Mujib's policy reforms single handedly provided three to four years of seniority as token of service to Ex- mukti bahini officers, and many other perks were offered to their respective families, and upward mobility and selection in civil services (Ahamed 1988: 52). The *raison d'être* for Mujib to approach such measures were to: first to eliminate the war related tensions which sprung between military and civilians, second he made use of the tactics employed by the

government in exile, by awarding ranks of army to politicians, which in itself came in conflict with the repatriated ones.

The year 1973 when repatriated were re-inducted into their respective positions in army, brought to forefront various degrees of conflicting situations which rose not only from material grievances in terms of their ranks and perks, but had severe political and symbolic undertones. The claims and counter claims of freedom fighters and repatriated personnel were that, former should be given credentials for the war, though latter accused them for forging alliance with India which was seen as a compromise to win the war. For repatriated personnel, they rapidly developed an understanding that their position was superior in the sense of their quantitative strength in the force, but with minimal influence, so coup d'état was the only solution through which they could exert the leverage. So for the regime, lack of cohesion within the rank and file of army was more dangerous than the contestation between state and communist parties (Ziring 1994: 32-34). To utter great surprise the coup of 1975 was not politically moved, rather it was an attempt to hold control over army's command (Ziring 1994: 35). In essence Mujib's tactics of dividing the army, turned to be bloody enough.

### **5.5 The Military Coups and Countercoups in 1975**

The assassination of Mujib and his kin, along with his associates 15th August, 1975 has been termed as "leaderless coup" (Maniruzzaman 1982). The driving force for the opposition composed of repatriated and liberation fighters were the over arching resentment against AL regime's handling of post war situation and the governance of a more isolated Mujibist loyalist clique. Actually the operation was planned by repatriated officers of senior ranks, in cooperation with AL's right wingers within the party, among them most prominent was Mushtaque, and rest of the action was undertaken by the retired officers of the Mukti Juddha, who were forced to retire by the government on the alleged reason of their involvement in high hand in previous operation into the aid of civil power (Maniruzzaman 1982: 32-36).

To bring normalcy to the murky situation after coup, the army staff was quick to declare the imposition of martial law, and ordered the high ranking officials like Majors who were behind the coup to return back to army headquarters, which they initially denied to follow. Strategy adopted by those Majors were to bring Mushtaque to the seat of President and to vanish from the

centre stage after the new COAS takes the charge, notably Major-General Ziaur Rahman was the most likely candidate (Mannan 2005). Zia was considered to have the power to strike balance between two groups formed within the army, because was not repatriated personnel but the one who held a decisive position in the civil war being a sector commander. Moreover the outcome of the coup was that cabinet, constitution, and the Parliament were not dissolved. Nevertheless, it became crystal clear that the restoration of power and position of the repatriated along with a favorable politician to be granted the command of government, and eviction of the authoritarian leadership of AL were the important objectives (Mannan 2005: 17-19).

After few months, on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 1975 was marked by the counter coup. A Mujib loyalist and ex freedom fighter, General Khaled Musharraf was capable of capturing power at Dhaka and pressure was mounted on Zia to arrest perpetrators of the 15<sup>th</sup> August conspiracy to kill Mujib. Zia flouted such orders, eventually he was arrested, and General Khaled Musharraf became the new COAS of the country. The previous trend was followed in which Khaled showed his reluctance to hold any executive power under his leadership, thus civilian was found to head the position of Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA) (Masud 2007: 7). Third coup took place right after four days, under the leadership of left leaning Colonel Taher of the BGB force, the sole goal was to set free Zia so that he could revive revolutionaries' agenda (Masud 20007). In order to avoid the repatriated officials to question the role of Taher, he chose to remain incognito as he was evicted by Mujib regime from army in 1972. After the release, initial tactic of Zia was to utilise the existing dividing lines and fissures within the army, to make his position stronger than ever as the convergence of two opposite waves against single enemy AL provided him the required environment. Like his early tenure, he opted to entrust the executive power in civilian leadership, though he remained behind the scene to strengthen his position in political sphere.

The multiple coups which took place between 1975 to 1981 in Bangladesh clearly demonstrated the degree and intensity of structural instabilities within army, their lack of internal cohesion and attitude to desertions (Mohsen 2002: 12-17). Two persisting issues dominated the political scene in Bangladesh, namely the existence of revolutionary ideas led troops and the principle opposition maintained by members of Mukti Juddha and repatriated. It was due to the opposing vested interests that swayed way for factionalism, rather establishing a strong military based dictatorship. The multiple mutiny and revolts which happened in Bangladesh till the year 1981

were basically survival reflexes or tactics of the warring groups, to pit one group against the other in simple terms (Mohsen 2002: 19). There was a sense of understanding and fear among them that, if any group succeeds to capture the state power, the other's existence would be in grave danger. Hence we can come to a point that in Bangladesh, the overshadowing of the cooperating interest forbade the country to establish a powerful military dictatorship.

## **5.6 Civil Military Relations and Politics of Ziaur Rahman: Authoritarianism and Modernization**

Mujib's authoritarian tendencies can be calculated by looking at his policies like expulsion of communist elements who were in opposition to Delhi-Moscow axis, ban on the activities of religion based parties, thus cleared his path to establish civilian dictatorship or simply one party system. Indeed, his political organisation consisted not just loyalists of AL, rather he brought forth a constellation of people from his family, relatives and other close associates which formed the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (People's League of Bangladesh's Peasants and Workers – BAKSAL) (Khan 2008). This eventually weakened the activities of civil society. The most probable opposition to his authoritarian regime came from army only to challenge his civilian form of dictatorship.

In this situation filled with chaos, made Zia's entry as a legitimate one, which could only maintain law and order, received public opinion in his favour (Mannan 2008). Under Zia, new equations were placed, in which the left leaning BSS and Jashod leaders who were kingmakers for him were arrested, on the flip side, repatriated one who were less organised became the new allies in the new power structure. The arrest of Colonel Taher and his sentence to death was a setback to those soldiers who have vigorously participated in the liberation war, especially 7<sup>th</sup> November revolution, this was termed as an act of treason, though this event turned many soldiers to organise series of future rebellions (Rahman 2006).

Zia thought Taher's revolutionary base as a threat to his position, which led to his arrest and execution, though it aggravated the situation into more instabilities as several mutinies were undertaken by various regiment in a form of chain reaction. Rule and leadership of Zia came into question from the period November 1975 to October 1977, approximately 22 mutinies and 10 revolts, among them 10 can be termed as severe coup attempts, and the most serious was the

coup attack happened on 2nd October, 1977 (Hakim 1998: 299; Hussain 2003: 8). The October mutiny was important among all because rest of the coup were launched from peripheral units of the army, though this attempt took place in the country's capital. In addition, this coup was aimed to assassinate Zia, for the purpose country witnessed a joint operation by soldiers, members of air force, army's Junior Chief Officers (JCOs) and National Chief Officers (NCOs), and they were committed to establish soldiers' revolutionary committee in the lines of sepoy bplot of November 1975 (Mohsen 2002).

Rather discussing on loopholes in civil military relations, internally army was not stable. Such wobbly scenario can be drawn from the fact that Zia after assuming power gave directions to raise a special police force of 12,500 personnel to cater his interests, which was somehow shared close proximity to the formation of JRB by Mujib. In order to counter Jashod, he was sure not to rely completely on army to hunt down various clandestine activities of the group, thus required him to entrust the operations on a new specialized force. Zia till the presidential elections of 1978, retained the office of COAS, this was done deliberately to avoid any sort of hostilities from his opponents. His suspicion over the military itself did not vanish even after acquiring the office of President, because he continued to stay in the residence of COAS within army headquarters than the designated presidential palace (Ahamed 1988: 125).

Zia's assassination reveals many drawbacks in the institution called army, because it can be explained in a way that the office of COAS was the command and control of the force as enshrined in the constitution, but on regular basis it was challenged by division command heads like General Officer Commanding (GOC), they exerted their power in the case of nomination and promotion of personnel who belonged to their division. Such tense situations often paved way for rebellions, and the most sparkling example of this condition was the coup of 30th May, 1981 which was conspired to kill Zia (Franda 1982: 241-243). Though they consequently moved to his own fall, the various steps initiated by Zia to tackle the situations are proved noting because such steps already the army.

With the coup of October 1977, country was divided into territories on the basis of newly formed five divisions (Ahamed 1988: 110). The outcome was remarkable because by the year 1981 the army consisted of 15 % mukti juddha soldiers and 25 % were drawn from repatriated personnel, thus making the remaining 60% as the result of Zia's strategies and expansionist policy (Ahamed

1988: 117). The logic behind his strategy was to weaken the paternalistic or symbiotic relationship developed by commanders and their men, so it l benefit in the induction of apolitical personnel capable to keep check on ideological factions which was in place since the birth of Bangladesh.

To add more, modernization drive of the armed forces was introduced by Zia, as the fresh recruits were trained with a new approach to inculcate military personnel's duties and responsibilities towards the institution and upholding the constitutional ethos, along with this stress was made to maintain relations with Pakistan, while attempts were made to truncate in every possible way the legacy of India's assistance during liberation war. Other major reforms made during the regime of Zia were the increase in remuneration of both officers and soldiers which had drawn many to join the service, apart from this batman system of appointing private recruits as servants was abolished. In the post retirement period, retired officers were granted lucrative private jobs, as well as support base was provided for them to venture into business (Ahamed 1988: 129).

The tenure of Mujib government allotted 13% of the public expenditure for defence budget in 1974-1975, simultaneously rose to 32% very next year, such trend continued in the succeeding years, this was the vital reason which deliberately made modernization of army possible. Datas and figures point to the fact that military expenditure from the period 1972-81 stood at 186% (Huque and Akhter 1989: 183). The important distinction between Zia and Mujib was that, the former is sometimes known to have restored the activities of various political parties which were banned under the latter. What stood as a stark contrast to Mujib was Zia's re-establishment of the practice left by British rulers after the 1857 revolt i.e., to execute rebel officers.

Zia could not cope up with instabilities within the army in a full fledged manner, he acquired the source of required legitimacy by civilianization of his political office i.e., through the electorate. In the lines of General Ayub Khan he adopted the model of Basic Democracy, which was instrumental in turning his regime on populist and religious discourse. He opened up the political arena for competitive elections for various posts ranging from referendum, parliamentary and presidential, his electoral reforms was turned beneficial for religious parties like the Jamaat-e-



Islami Bangladesh (JIB), he himself founded Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) which could garner support from sections of people who were against Awami League, ex-collaborators and some elements from radical left (Ahmed 1998; Mannan 2002). These developments had immense impact on the political climate of the country because, ideology as a base for political mobilization was superseded by the new band of power pooling concentrated on personality cult, whose policies and activities reflected the patriarchal nature and maintenance of patron-client relationship. Among them JIB was a notable exemption.

### **5.7 General Ershad and Attempts for Army's Stabilization**

As observed by one scholar the 24th March, 1982 coup d'état by General Ershad has great significance which requires discussion on major three inter-related aspects. These are the following: i) institutionalization the army or specifically the ambit within a set of state's institutions which it has managed to operate, ii) increasing stride of professionalism in army, and its specified ranks, iii) major developments within the ranks of army in 1980s, having sociological connotations (Jahan 2005: 192). With the dawn of General Ershad's ascendance to power after the death of Zia, brought major changes in a way which stressed on the necessity of military stabilization, as the army was instrumental in accepting the return of civilian power at center of politics. Ershad's regime was involved in developing the constitutional functions to be played by army in the institutions within the state apparatus. His ideas about politics and military were very much vocal. With a slight inclination on Taher's ideas of productive army, Ershad believed that the events which unfolded after formation of the country was due to the ignorance of then leadership in designing and formulating a well deserved position for army in the state machinery. For him army is an institution which has its own potential and confidence, which in his views were not properly tapped by the founding fathers of the country (Jahan 2005: 199).

Distinctive features of coup d'état by Ershad, differing to his predecessors were that, he acted quickly to take the post of head of state or CMLA, the underlying objective was to earn legitimacy to his military based dictatorship. The next move he made was the transformation of civilian based institutions and administrative wings including the Secretay level to be kept under the influence of militarisation, this aspect has its legacy to the Zia regime. In this form of governance, his fundamental plan was to engage military personnel in cantonments to work in civil administration and deliberate concentration of power and authority under the office of

Presidency, with a sole intention to thwart any military threat which his predecessors faced (Hasanuzzaman 1991: 41). Unlike Zia he did not delegate the functions of administering law and order under any special police or force like JRB, his vision was to entrust and enhance the responsibilities of army in maintaining political and moral order in the state (Hakim 1998: 289).

Troubles for Ershad's government commenced when he chose the Parliamentary path to bring a law for inducting representatives from military in councils of district level, whereas such councils had already elected members. This led to wide spread protest in streets organised by opposition parties, eventually Ershad was compelled to set aside the law he had submitted and resulted in the dissolution of Parliament. The idea to establish political role for military in a well institutionalised manner received a setback, from which he could not recover in political terms (Islam 2009).

Post 1975 army witnessed major changes in multiple ways, as it produced a legion of officers in the military who had no legacy of fighting the liberation war and the novel brand of nationalism was not aimed at transforming the society or bridging cooperation between liberation fighters and civil society. Though under Zia, military and the nationalism was refurbished to cater his regime's need by defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bangladesh by emphasizing on deep belief in Islamic principles (Jahangir 2002). Core principle of switching to Islamic credentials to define nationalism was an attempt to design country's distinctiveness to India which had significant Bengali population sharing common borders with Bangladesh, thus separate idea based on Bangladeshi nationalism in contrast to Bengali nationalism was felt necessary for the Muslim majority population of the country.

Two major engagements for the military was designated by both Zia and Ershad which could be termed as part of stabilization measures in the 1980s, probably it reduced the army's intervention in the politics of the domestic sphere. First was the cultivation was India as a threat to its survival, which subsequently required the officers and soldiers to vest their efforts to take a defensive position in a possible attack or misadventure by India. Both Zia and Ershad shared commonality in designing the national defence strategy by engaging it's military to concentrate on formulating possible measures against India, which locks Bangladesh's borders on three sides. Second was Ershad's decision to send the military to UN Peace Keeping operations was instrumental in injecting professionalism in the personnel. UNIIMOG was Bangladesh's first

UNPKF mission which began in 1988, and till the year 1997 it could participate in eight major missions, among them Kuwait's UNIKOM and UNMIH of Haiti is well recognized (Shamim 1994). In 1998 Bangladesh could acclaim the distinguish achievement of being largest provider of its military personnel in UN Troops. Following this, Bangladesh was offered to create a special reserve battalion, which could be called in on emergency basis (Ali 1998: 12). Given the significance of its contribution in UN army, it was permitted to send its Brigadier rank official to be appointed as chief military observer. Thus participation in UNPKF proved beneficial for army personnel as it provided good material incentives, which initially reduced their intrusion into politics of the country.

### **5.8 Opposition Parties and Vibrant Civil Society: Army's New Challenges**

To safeguard the power and position held by two Generals namely Zia and Ershad made initiatives to tackle instabilities by weeding out socialistic principles for development, created a common enemy around the fabricated notion of Indian hegemony, revitalized relations with countries like USA, Pakistan, and Islamic countries. Their approach was to forge a holistic alliance composed of military, then loyalists from bureaucracy, and major industrial houses along with businesspersons of middle to high income groups, thus both were capable for alleviating Mujibist loyalists, as it was required for them to attach legitimacy to their governance and the regime they were ruling (Nuruzzaman 2004: 43).

Varying degrees of army's relations with civil society was different in 1980s if compared with 1970s. The army and civil society developed a working alliance, to attain liberation through revolutionary tactics, unfortunately civil society was kept away from nation building process after the war ended. Ignoring the required developments in societal and ideological sector, army extended its favors and relations with corporate houses, and ruling elite (Schendel 2009). Barring two issues of national importance where army's involvement was visible i.e., antecedents of the freedom struggle, and insurgency in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), other than these two military was not interested to make reforms and changes in the limitations of freedom exercised by Press, rewriting school's textbooks, or to keep vigil on the political activities at University level.

Ershad's government was unable to contain the rising dissatisfaction among the people, as opposition parties made use of this opportunity to oppose his regime for instabilities, eventually

he was forced to lift the martial law, and simultaneously it paved way for the restoration of democracy in the country in 1991 and establishment of civilian role. In this stage, return of street politics through organisation of hartals and protests of pre-liberation war i.e., between 1950's and 1960s, was significant enough to weaken Ershad led government (Hossain 2009). The public sphere for staging hartals and vociferous protests were done by four major sections within opposition i.e, BNP headed by widow of General Zia with a mix of liberal and conservative outlook, Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina revived Awami league under her leadership to form alliance with some parties, Islamist party like Jamaat-i-Islami, and finally left leaning groups who had inclination to pro-Moscow Communist party which was in moribund state due to pressures from then Zia government and its party BNP (Karim 2004). In November 1990, to bring down Ershad's government, these four parties formed an alliance, forcing the former to resign.

Due to increasing disagreements inside the military against Ershad, and pressures mounted by foreign aid providers were two major variables, which increasingly reduced army's involvement in the internal affairs of the country. More often Ershad government relied on police and paramilitary to keep check on growing opposition's threat and dissent, as he was instrumental in using repressive measures and political methods to manoeuvre (Ahmed 2002). Ershad following the lines of his predecessor by flouting a new political organisation i.e. the Jatiyo Party (JP), a move intended to bring opposition parties to his command. Regular elections were done like in 1985 referendum and presidential elections were conducted and election to Parliament was held in 1986 and also in 1988 (Choudhary 2004). When situation became complicate to handle opposition parties, Ershad employed his party's student wing to stage violent activities by arming them and inclusion of criminal elements, most dreadful was his party's violence unleashed in the Dhaka University campus in the years 1987 and 1990. Jamaat-e-Islami calls itself as the front runner organisation which demanded for setting up of caretaker government headed by retired Chief Justice, with an obligation to hold free and fair elections in a neutral manner (Khan 2008). The provision for care taker government was brought for institutionalization in 1996.

Economic challenges came handy with the rising hartals and street based violent politics as it engulfed the country with insecurities and deteriorated law and order, outcome was Ershad lost his major alliance partners who were instrumental in the survival of his government i.e the upper

middle income groups and the bureaucracy, eventually he could not uphold a stable and balanced economy to flourish, as to add more anxieties he found problems in extracting the flow of foreign aid. Overwhelmed by these developments, Ershad had to bring those elements to the front which he would earlier eschew for being a potential threat to his survival. Although the fall of Ershad's government in December 1990, could not abridge the patrimonial relations maintained and developed between upper middle class, bureaucracy, and the military.

### **5.9 Democratization and the Return of Factionalism: Politicization and Manipulation of the Military**

As far as Bangladesh's political developments are concerned in its early two decades of formation, any sort of political instabilities drew attention of the military to stage coup d'état as it happened 1975 and 1982, nevertheless Ershad government's crisis did not lead to any such military's takeover. In this section, aim is to present the reasons which made the military to pave way for smooth democratisation, and causes that made them to withdraw support to Ershad. For this context rational choice theory based on cost-benefit ratio fits in, military was capable of understanding the strength regained by civilian political parties, their tactics for mass mobilizations, so any attempt to military take over would have proved counter productive (Khan 2008: 121-136). Extremely divided political environment, the differences in the opinions of various intelligence agencies notably Directorate General of Forces' Intelligence (DGFI), and the antecedents of violence and repression unleashed by the force against opposition parties, which was later continued by JP's armed cadre, and finally pressures exerted by embassies of Western countries not to support any military dictatorship or junta made military to act neutral in the smooth transition to democracy (Hakim 1998: 292).

Apart from the above mentioned rationale for military's withdrawal from any coup attempt was to preserve the unity and its pride as past coups have infested the institution with multiple layers of corrupt practices undertaken by individual officers, which presented a threat to its survival itself. Through the distribution of lands and military foundations, which provided numerous retired officers and their families with social Alfred Stepan evoke the interests of the 'army as an institution' to explain certain situations of 'transitions' between authoritarian and competitive regimes (Hakim 1998: 293-297).

As observed and explained by a scholar, individual selfish interests of officers in the military is dangerous to its discipline than the done by the institution as collective enterprises in the economy of the country. This was particularly visible in countries like Bangladesh and Indonesia where individual selfish interests superseded the collective of the military (Wilkinson 2000: 216). Army's rapid action against individual based corruption was seen in 1997 when President was asked to expulsion of the Naval Chief Admiral Mansurul Haque. Bangladesh nurtured a system of partnership in terms of common interests which did not permit military to earn collectively from the fruits of economic growth, thus despite all odds, army single handedly refused to support Ershad under the pretext of any stain to army's prestige. Drop in the flow of aid added severities in the 1980s, which changed the course of politics of Bangladesh (Wilkinson 2000).

Remnants of bloodshed unleashed by lower order privates during sepyo bplot 7th November, 1975, and many such happened in 1977, and 1981 remained fresh in the minds of officers' who refused to play heightened role in the political crisis following eight years of tranquility in Ershad's government (Sayem 1988). The sepyo bplot is significant due to the fact that many high ranking officers from navy and army and even COAS which counted for 2000 in total were brutally slaughtered in the mayhem. Repelling causes for army to back out despite ideology based reunification by Ershad could not hold them to his aid, emergence of stronger opposition and lack of internal cohesion infested with corruption could be counted as predominant reasons (Hasanuzzaman 1998).

In the events succeeding the political crisis in Ershad government was that newly appointed COAS, Lieutenant-General Nuruddin Khan was decisive in bridging contacts with both leaders of BNP and AL, and expressed his desire not to support Ershad (Ved 1991: 272). According to an expert, in the last days of Ershad's rule, military with all possibilities kept a distance from then President or Head of the state, in which Ershad's name was maligned in a way that he was termed as responsible for all economic and political instabilities and widespread corruption in his nine years of rule (Khan 1997).

As a result first caretaker government headed by Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed came into power, after the smooth conduct of elections in February 1991, paved way for the passage of 12<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment which omitted the residential prerogatives and much awaited

restoration of Parliamentary system was institutionalised (Khan 1998). With respect to these developments, army backed out of its role in political sphere, and the country could shun many instances of political crisis which engulfed the country since its emergence as it substantially weakened the democratic structures. Defence portfolio was kept under the Prime Minister's office, thus the control of armed forces came to an elected representative. This was intended to reduce the COAS direct intervention in the matters pertaining to armed forces (Hossain 2009).

Bangladesh since its restoration of democracy in 1991, witnessed army's involvement in dismantling democratically elected government was in 2007 on the pretext of mass corruption and criminal activities unleashed by political parties, and state of emergency was declared. Notably, army could vest power only during the interim period when civilian control over it was dramatically minimal i.e. between two interim governments. As in the case of Pakistan interplay between the power of PM and COAS has not been smooth, for instance in October 1999 PM Nawaz Shaif used his constitutional right to remove then COAS, in turn the PM was forced to resign, it happened because COAS was capable to garner support in case of any civilian intervention in the high ranking army posting (Karim 2005).

In stark contrast to Pakistan, Bangladesh PM has exerted the power to make changes in the military chain of command in a direct manner. The source of confidence flows from the existence of a bonding of allegiance between the government in power and the military elite, made possible by the Bangladesh polity's absolute centralized authority. In addition to this, military's loyalty is at first place towards the head of the government or PM, rather to the state or civilian power. This emanates from the fact that Bangladesh's Prime minister leads and forms a kinship network required to maintain the power and authority. Precedence is granted to personalized links, which has proved to bridge the civilian and military administration. This can be better understood from an instance, when in 1997 then PM Sheikh Hasina was instrumental in nominating her relative as the COAS, i.e. Lieutenant-General Mustafizur Rahman (Schendel 2009). It would be hard to deny that army was re-politicised even under the democratic rule, as it paved way for a patrimonial structure.

## 5.10 The Politicized Army and Its Dividing Moves

Bangladesh experience created an environment to develop sense of disturbances and insecurities felt by civil societies and political parties with respect to the civilian system and army from 1991 onwards, which may be labeled as different in light of the fact that the military had moved away from over politicization and politics (Hossain 2009). Such views and analysis that the army could still exerted its pressure behind the curtain, although it did not use political power, is clear history of its pressurizing and interventionist role in the past. The continuous bond between civilian and the army, the role of civilian system in influencing the army led to the origin of factionalism in both, explained the 1991 politicians' defiance and the army. Political leaders were concerned about the factional politics in the army still gained benefits out of it.

The main objectives were to making control over the army and re-appropriate it. During these periods, it was Khaleda Zia who played a huge role in attaining this process (Schendel 2009). She tried her level best to dominate the army segments and appeared as one of the strongest controller of the army. She first sought to weaken Ershad's army by retiring, or sending as ambassadors, the oldest and/or most involved officers of the previous regime. Then, in order to reduce the influence of Ershad and his partisans she could not evict, she tried to discredit them by leaking out information about organized corruption under Ershad, as well as criminal activities he had allegedly sponsored.

In parallel with this move, Khaleda Zia played the score of her defunct husband's prestige; though terribly harsh with the military, his memory still enjoyed the aura of the righteous and honest freedom fighter; some had even raised him to the status of a martyr after his assassination. To help her in this strategy, a critical figure was Major (retd.) Iskandar, Khaleda's own brother, who gave up his military carrier in the mid-1970s and became one of Zia's closest collaborators (Jahangir 2002). Iskandar personally knew every officer who had been commissioned and promoted by his brother-in-law, and served as intermediary between the PM and the staff in order to give these officers the most important positions. Though exercised outside the institution, his influence was widespread.

Taking care of one another was and still is at the bottom of the relation between not only the military elite and the political parties, but also between these two and the business community.



The army is the main buyer of national industries and a significant real estate investor, through the Defence Officers Building Houses Societies (Islam 2009). A general never directly supports a political party, but facilitates the settling of contracts between the Armed Forces Division and a company, the latter pouring a commission back to the party. But the patron-client relationship goes further. When this officer gets retired, if he does not possess enough wealth and influence to directly obtain the investiture of the party, the latter will still find for him a leading position in a structure profitable enough to 'subsidize' the party and win its ticket in the next election (Islam 2009).

By the time the AL came back to power in 1996, another personal and clientelist-based dividing line was added. This new faction was composed of former officers from the Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini (JRB) who had been reintegrated in the army after this force had been dissolved. Ostracized under Ershad and neglected during Khaleda Zia's government (1991-1996), they obtained promotions and commanding positions after 1996 (Andaleeb 2007). But in contrast with the Iskandar's Brigade's officers, deeply-rooted and in good terms with the last elements of the old generation from the Pakistan Academy, the JRB officers were subject to strong segregation by the rest of the military elite. Negatively considered because of their non-military past, they were, and continue to be, blamed for being the main beneficiaries of the changes in the military hierarchy after 1996 (Andaleeb 2007).

The mechanisms of the post-91 factionalism are very similar to the tradition inherited from the Independence war and strengthened afterwards. Because the three consecutive cabinets felt insecure with the partisan features of the army, every one of them did whatever it could to divert its rules and to promote mid-ranking officers in order to forge a circle of friendly generals, either united by their political past or by their common batch (Rahman 2008). The central question to ask, then, is whether the army's politicization became a factor of political instability or not. To answer it, a close examination at the politico-military crisis of May 1996 is relevant. Soon after Khaleda Zia's government handed over power to a caretaker government headed by a retired Chief Justice, free and fair election according to the 13th constitutional amendment were announced. This was also made necessary by the paralysis of democratic institutions since 1994, when opposition parties (AL, JP and JIB) started to boycott the Parliament while claiming that the coming election would never be fair unless organized by a non-party caretaker government

(Rahman 2008). They had also been asking that this change be enshrined in the constitution in order to make this practice systematic at the end of every government's tenure.

The BNP did not initially answer these demands and contested parliamentary election alone in February 1996. Under pressure from the opposition's hartals, the new Parliament, monopolized by the BNP, eventually had to give in and have the amendment voted, but added a detail, barely noticed: during a period of ninety days, while the caretaker government is supposed to organize the elections, the higher command of the armed forces is entirely vested in the President (Islam 1996: 22). Yet the President at that time, Abdur Rahman Biswas, had been elected by the outgoing BNP majority as per the rules of the parliamentary system.

Therefore, and in contrast with the non-partisan caretaker government's prerogatives, the army's control was not in neutral hands. The crisis started when President Biswas decided to dismiss two officers considered close to the AL. The COAS, General Nasim, refused that order and openly confronted civilian power. He ordered units to march against Dhaka in order to pressure the President. This crisis, hastily described as a coup attempt, was finally solved thanks to the loyalty of the two-star generals, including the head of military intelligence (DGFI), who managed to arrest General Nasim (Islam 1996: 24). Eventually, democratic elections were organized in June 1996, which gave the AL the majority in Parliament. As a majority of officers refused to support the so-called coup, several scholars saw in this event a proof of the army's growing professionalism.

That professionalism was the main reason behind the aborted 1996 coup remains to be demonstrated. A fairly different interpretation can be proposed. After nine years of stability in civil-military relations during Ershad's government, this politico-military crisis clearly exemplified the renewed politicization of the armed forces and the re-emergence of factionalism (Halim 2010). The two main political parties, using their influence on the army to give a bias to the coming election, nurtured this new factionalism. One should not forget, indeed, that the military was to be deployed to assure law and order on the polling day. Several interviews with retired officers, who played a role in these events, indicate that the loyalists were all supporters of BNP, whereas the officers who were initially dismissed had had contacts with the AL with the next election in view. The COAS himself was seen as close to the AL. Moreover, the three laid-

off officers, including Nasim, were all ex-freedom fighters, while President Biswas had commanded razakar units in the 1971 war (Halim 2010).

The army's factionalism was a factor of political instability or, to put it in other words, the renewed factionalism implied by the alternation of clientelist and dynastic parties in power has been threatening, in return, the democratization process itself. And the crisis occurred, expectably, during the interim period before the planned 2007 general election (Rabindranath 2010). At this juncture and intrinsically, the acting government does not have any popular legitimacy and the army's higher command is left to the presidency, a necessarily weak institution in a parliamentary system. Neither this time did the head of the government have any legality: President Iajuddin Ahmed indeed took over as Chief Adviser of the caretaker government without following the process of the 13th Amendment (Rabindranath 2010).

Moreover, political turmoil and violence in street battles caused by the AL and the BNP had reached intolerable levels, and foreign actors were regarding the impartiality of the promised election with more and more suspicion. By participating in these polls as the last guardians of the cherished though doomed free and fair election – the electoral commission was biased towards BNP, and several monitoring foreign missions had already been recalled – the military would have severely endangered its credit. Exactly for the same corporative motives as in 1991, the army followed the opposite path. It confiscated power from political parties by pushing Iajuddin to stall the election, declare the state of emergency, and resign as head of the government, while Fakhruddin Ahmed, a high-ranking bureaucrat backed by the military, took over as Chief Adviser (Andaleeb 2009).

The given reason: Like at the end of the 8-year-long Ershad's rule, corruption of leaders of the main parties and corruption/politicization of civil servants during the 16-year-long civilian rule had not only crippled the economy, it had also threatened the prestige of the army as an uncorrupted institution (Andaleeb 2009). In the early days of January 2007, the United Nations had warned Bangladesh to strip the army of its lucrative peacekeeping duties if it supported the controversial election. It lies in the military hierarchy's perception of being manipulated by the government, notably because of the latter's populist use of the army to combat crime and corruption in joint operations, and the renewed contacts with inefficient and corrupt civil agencies implied by these operations, to which we shall now turn.

### **5.11 Civil Military Relations in Khaleda Zia's Regime**

The understanding and views of the military as one of the last saviours and incorruptible to solve the burning issues in Bangladesh emerged when Khaleda Zia's administration initiated a comprehensive attack on crime in the month of October 2002. Operations like Operation Clean Heart and Spider Web, because of the constant pressure from donors to maintain law and order in Bangladesh as it seriously hamper internal security were introduced. There was also strong public opinion and pressure on government and they were expecting the BNP to keep its electoral promises of 2001 (Schendel 2009). The operations were successful as it conducted with confidentiality. The army was full fledged in controlling the criminal elements in society and they have not informed Home Ministry on their plans of actions. The army arrested many of the criminals as per the list provided by the DGFI. On the very first day, around 1500 people were arrested and taken into custody. The army imprisoned leaders of all parties including Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (Halim 2016).

With regard to civil military relations in Bangladesh, three aspects of these operations should be noted and discussed here. First aspect reveals the trust between civilian leaders and the army heads for example during these operations one could observe a strong bond between the PM and the COAS (Hossain 29). In order to maximize the impacts of these operations, around 24,000 soldiers were deployed. There were two leaders from the army and BNP opposing this move since the beginning. The BNPs timely interference avoided any sort of stoppage in the military action on criminals. The previous President, Badrudozza Chowdhury and the COAS, Lieutenant-General Haroon-ar Rashid had opposed this move and were forced to resign. Later, after their resignation, the military carried out their actions without any delay. The previous president replaced with Iajuddin Ahmed and General Haroon was replaced by General Mashud actually facilitated the military to speed up their actions.

Second analysis finds its answer in the cooperation of military with civilian enforcement system in anti crime drive. There the military was not in a monopolistic position to take decision on its own (Masud 2009). There are several enforcement agencies including Home Ministry, local police, the Ansar, paramilitary institutions for internal security, Bangladesh Rifles etc. had been cooperated and engaged in several phases of the operation. Because of such cooperation of both military and civilian system, this operation later renamed as Joint Drive Operation. While raids

and arrests went on, military were accused of human rights violations. It was reported that more than 50 people died of heart attacks while interrogation. The public including media and intellectuals blamed the ruling regime and criticized for its continuous human rights violations. The public began to question the government and asked government to deal situations more responsibly. Even the army dared to arrest BNP leaders too and it reduced BNP public image. BNP started mounting pressure on military and many of the BNP leaders released later. Third reason which shown the cooperation of civilian system with the military reflected when civilian leaders of Bangladesh negotiated to withdraw all the legal cases on the army officers. The army was charged and filed with serious human rights violations which it had committed during 87 days of arrest and interrogations (Khan 2009).

But as far as the democratic norms, institutional links and procedures between the civilians and the military are concerned, operation Spider Web and Clean Heart reflected a failure and a systemic collapse. At the same, these operations gave the army a sort of confidence in proving their professionalism and skill to serve the country. On the one hand, it shows structural problems which affected the civilian system badly. It shows lack of accountability and transparency in decision-making system as specific roles and duties were not legalized and institutionalized and all aspects extremely depended on the relationship and bond between the Prime Minister and few of the Generals (Khan 2009). Moreover, the consequences of army's actions demanded more legal protection for army officers. It actually hindered the well functioning of democracy and Bangladeshi state system (Schendel 2009). To be precise, it is a fact that for better and improved civil military relations, both civilian system and the military have to be established and maintained on the basis of democratic principles, if not an imbalance would be results.

Bangladesh has seen such operations with the cooperation of military to check anti social elements in the society. There were occasions army had given full power to arrest the criminals and handed over to the civilian enforcement agencies. Though the army was gaining trust of the government through such activities, public and opposition parties started questioning the legality of such actions. Because of the public and opposition pressure on government, the state's police and force ha undergone a process of militarization by introducing a new force-Rapid Action Battalion in 2004 (Islam 2009). But many of the members were military officers and rest of the

police was trained by the military itself. Whatever be the explanations to these situations, there was constant pressure on ruling regime to re think over the military's intervention to tackle such criminal cases.

### **5.12 Civil Military Relations during Khaleda Zia Regime (2002-2006) and Military backed Caretaker Government (2007-2008)**

Since Khaleda Zia demitted office after completion of her five-year term as prime minister in October 2006, Bangladesh has been plunged into a series of political crises. Khaleda undermined the office of prime minister through her appointment of a caretaker government of partisans. The President, Iajuddin Ahmed, in his turn usurped the powers of the caretaker government. Just days before elections to the ninth Jatiya Sangsad emergency was introduced in the country on 11 January, 2007. This was followed by the President surrendering his dual responsibility, which paved the way for the formation of the second caretaker government headed by Fakhruddin Ahmed. Meanwhile, parliament was dissolved without an election schedule. Under intense public pressure, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) went on leave. The second caretaker government has been preoccupied with reforming the political system rather than fulfilling its primary responsibility of holding a free and fair election within ninety days of taking over. The constitutional requirement that internal emergency has to be ratified within 120 days of declaration, that is by 12 May, will not be met because parliament stands dissolved and elections are not in sight. But these periods were witnessed the erosion of some principal institutions of democracy, primary among them the office of President, Chief Advisor to the caretaker government, Election Commission, parliament, political parties and the military.

The imposition of emergency was preceded by controversies surrounding the appointment of Chief Adviser to the caretaker government. According to the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution approved by the sixth parliament on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 1996, a neutral caretaker government would be formed to organise free and fair elections to the Jatiya Sangsad (Rabindranath 2016). Periodic accusations of partisanship and official interference resulted in Bangladesh opting for this unique institution as a transitional arrangement after an elected government completes its five-year term. Under the provisions, the most recently retired chief justice of the Supreme Court would become head of the caretaker government. Bangladesh has so far held two Jatiya Sangsad elections under caretaker governments.

On 14 May, 2004 the four-party coalition government headed by Khaleda Zia of the BNP passed the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution, increasing the retirement age of Supreme Court judges from 65 to 67 years. This in practice meant that Justice K.M. Hasan would become head of the caretaker government when the current government demitted office. The Justice would continue his term and Justice K.M. Hasan would be the last outgoing Chief Justice to head the caretaker government. Justice Hasan had been a member of the BNP. The opposition accused the government of partisanship and facilitating the nomination of its former member to this neutral post. Widespread public disapproval and criticism of the opposition resulted in Justice Hasan declining to head the caretaker government. The Constitution prescribes an orderly procedure to find alternative arrangements. If other retired judges of the Supreme Court are not available, Article 58 (C) suggests the nomination of a non-political public figure who enjoys widespread respect and acceptance. Instead of following these prescribed norms, on 30 October, 2006 President Iajuddin Ahmed concurrently assumed the office of Adviser to the caretaker government (Khan 2009).

For many Bangladeshis this move undermined the constitutional role of and respect for the office of President and evoked widespread public protest and opposition. Out of the 10-member council of advisers appointed by the President 9 resigned on 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 citing the dictatorial attitude of the President and lack of proper consultations. The President's brief attempt to deploy the military to tide over street protests came under more severe criticism and disapproval. Later, the President resigned as head of the caretaker government and declared a state of emergency. A couple of days later, a former World Bank official, Fakhruddin Ahmed, was appointed Chief Adviser with a new council of advisers. Under the internal emergency, the caretaker government has been functioning like an interim government, which the constitution does not provide for: a caretaker government has to conduct free and fair elections within three months after assuming office.

Under Article 107 the President could seek the opinion of the Supreme Court on issues of public importance. However, after cancelling the elections scheduled for 22 January such a reference has not been made until March 2007. The second caretaker administration immediately initiated specific reforms, including issuing of voter identity cards and correcting the voter list. A drive to purge corrupt institutions and individuals was also initiated. High-profile targets of this

campaign have been Tarique Rahman, son of Khaleda Zia, and some of his cronies. There have also been a few arrests of Awami League leaders but, General Ershad's Jatiya Party and noticeably those belonging to the Jama'at have been largely untouched. To facilitate their actions task forces vested with unbridled powers have been formed. As if this constitutional crisis were not enough, the Election Commission posed a different set of problems (Schendel 2009).

Pre-empting the functioning of the neutral caretaker government, as early as in 2005 the BNP-led coalition had filled the local administration with its members and supporters. To enhance its electoral chances, scores of election officers at district and Upazila levels were recruited from amongst the BNP and its coalition supporters. According to various media reports the ruling coalition filled over 700 posts with those affiliated with their parties. These appointments might be crucial for ensuring the victory of the BNP-led coalition, even under a neutral administration. Meanwhile the CEC, M.A. Aziz, was embroiled in serious controversies with the opposition and the judiciary. On 1 January, 2006 he unilaterally decided to draw up a fresh voter list, contrary to the High Court directive to update the existing list. Two of his colleagues were opposed to the move, which was seen by many as an exercise to inflate the voter list by including bogus members sympathetic to the ruling coalition.

In recent years, the Election Commission has come under severe criticism over a number of issues, which include:

- Failure to implement the delimitation laws to demarcate the parliamentary constituencies following the latest population census held in 2001.
- Publishing the draft of the fresh electoral roll despite a legal battle initiated by the opposition parties which was pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.
- According to the Awami League and many neutral commentators the report prepared by the National Democratic Institute had identified over 120,000 fake voters' names in the electoral roll, which also missed out between six and seven million genuine voters. There were also suggestions that the fresh voter list consisted of as many as 14 million fake names.
- Since August 2005 CEC Aziz had serious differences with the other election commissioners M. Munsef Ali and A.K. Mohammad Ali over the preparation of a fresh



voter list. In a bid to bolster his position in the Commission, Aziz inducted two BNP loyalists, Mahfuz and S.M. Zakaria, as new election commissioners.

- Despite the political tension in the country, especially after President Ahmed assumed office as head of the caretaker government, on 22 November the CEC went ahead and announced that the elections to the ninth Jatiya Sangsad would be held on 22 January, 2007.

Amidst the crisis over the caretaker government, the opposition led by the Awami League launched a personal and concerted campaign against the CEC. Finally, on 27 November, 2006 Aziz went on a long leave. A couple of days later President Ahmed reconstituted the Election Commission.

Civil military relations during caretaker government period were, to some extent, balanced. Why it was balanced, because there was no political parties in power. Instead, an interim government decently managed the state system with the full support of military elements. Even military was on a move to expel two big leaders of the country and tried to stick to the rule of the land. Such move of military came to be known as Minus Two Formula. Minus Two Formula was the result of peoples irritation with the two ruling factions in the country as they had been indulging personal revenge politics. These situations were the outcome of Khaleda Zia's illogical use of military during her term from 2002-2006 and counter reactions from Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina. In the name of cleaning criminal elements in the country, Khaled Zia had used military to purge and annihilate her opponents, particularly Awami League activists. So the state system had been witnessed the civilian's use of military for political purposes. Consequently, people's representatives forgot their subjects and developmental, welfare and future oriented programmes and policies have not been initiated and vindicated. The streets of Bangladesh have become battle field where hartals, public demonstrations, protests, scuffle and skirmishes were usual scenes. The military's demands for more professionalization and allocating more funds were unheard. Civil societies, think tanks, universities, media's etc were retaliated and a public consensus had generated to introduce caretaker government with the support of military. Rest two years, Bangladesh has seen a peaceful running of state system and it has reached to a stage when the caretaker government made a call for election (Datta 2007).

### **5.13 Weakened National Assembly (Jatiya Sangsad) and Civil Military Relations**

In the 2001 Jatiya Sangsad elections, the Awami League refused to gracefully accept the electoral verdict which had brought the BNP-led coalition to power. Since then the opposition has been regularly resorting to extra-parliamentary methods. Members of the Awami League attended the Jatiya Sangsad only when they were faced with the threat of disqualification. The government made it difficult for the opposition to function responsibly. The following are some examples:

- Opposition members were prevented from speaking on important national issues in parliament, sometimes by switching off the microphones.
- The formation of parliamentary standing committees, expected to be constituted following the inaugural session of the Jatiya Sangsad when a new government takes over, was delayed by almost two years.
- The government refused to discuss the arrest of Members of Parliament during various protests and agitations. They were protesting against misuses during military operation against terrorism or over corruption in the government, deteriorating law and order situation, shortage of wheat and paddy seeds, and increase of prices of fuel, gas, electricity, and water.

There were also serious differences over the conduct of elections for the ninth Jatiya Sangsad, originally due in January 2007. Given the obvious manipulation of the political system by the ruling alliance, the Awami League-led opposition parties were demanding:

- Reconstitution of the Election Commission,
- Preparation of a faultless voter list, and
- Ensuring of an environment congenial to the conduct of a free and fair election.

The Awami League has been demanding reforms in electoral laws and made its participation in the 2007 elections conditional upon the fulfilment of its demands. As it has been the trend in Bangladesh, various extra-constitutional means were adopted by the opposition as they were unable to hold dialogue within the Jatiya Sangsad. This resulted in Prime Minister Khaleda Zia suggesting the formation of a committee to discuss the reform proposals outside parliament. Coalition compulsions resulted in the BNP naming members of the religious parties to this

committee (Datta). This was unacceptable to the opposition. For long, the Awami League has blamed the religious allies of the BNP for the increasing number of terror attacks and undermining the political process. Objecting to the inclusion of Jama'at to the committee, the Awami League stepped up its agitation programmes, including a series of non-stop hartals. In the ensuing violence in Dhaka and elsewhere in Bangladesh, in the clashes with police some prominent Awami League leaders, such as Saber Hossain Choudhury and Asaduzzaman Nur, were severely injured.

#### **5. 14 Internal Challenges of Political Parties and Its Impacts on Civil Military Relations**

The major political parties have also been facing serious internal challenges. The BNP's problems could be directly traced to the rapid increase in extremist violence in the country ever since Khaleda returned to power in October 2001. Ironically, it was on a promise of rolling back deteriorating law and order that the BNP-led coalition won a huge mandate in the 2001 elections, but military operations, such as Clean Heart and Spider Web and the formation of Rapid Action Battalion were only partially successful. The larger problem of religious extremism went unchecked. For long the ruling coalition was in a denial mode, thus aggravating the problem. The government dismissed Islamic militancy as a conspiracy and an orchestrated campaign by some vested quarters and the creation of some newspapers. Islamic extremist violence, which began sporadically in 1999, peaked in 2004-2005. Between 1999 and December 2005, there were over 33 major bomb blasts, most of them attributed to militant groups or individuals (Datta 2007).

Official investigations were either not completed or yielded no result or led to no arrests. Attacks targeted at political leaders included the one on the Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina Wajid in August 2004 at a party rally, which killed twenty persons, including senior Awami League leader Ivy Rahman, and the assassination in January 2005 of S.A.M.S. Kibria, senior Awami League leader and former finance minister. Particularly sensational were the nationwide simultaneous bomb blasts on 17 August 2005, numbering over 300. Arguably, the unstable political conditions have benefited the increasingly influential Islamist fringe, led by legitimate governing parties like the Jama'at but extending to the violently militant Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) and the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) (Islam 2009).

It was the concerted international pressure that jolted the government into action. Their expression of concern over the deterioration of the governance situation in Bangladesh, especially the situation of law and order, political violence including recent bombings, and the climate of impunity prompted the government to ban the JMB and JMJB. The immediate arrest of Bangla Bhai and Shaikh Abdur Rahman, leaders of JMJB and JMB respectively led Khaleda Zia on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2006 to declare Bangladesh as a terrorism-free nation. The influence of religion has been palpable and conservative elements found the contrived system convenient to push their narrow agenda aggressively (Schendel 2009). Investigations had revealed that the coalition members, specifically Jamaa't cadres, were contributing funds to the JMB. Such reports and the failure of the government to decisively disengage from its coalition partners painted the BNP as willing partner if not a collaborator in extremist violence. The terror attacks had also precipitated a deep crisis and divisions within the BNP. A number of disgruntled BNP leaders publicly accused the ruling coalition of having links with religious extremists.

The government made only very limited and cursory attempts to investigate and unearth the underground terror links. Its lack of serious action invoked severe criticism that underground terrorist groups have been cultivated and sheltered by those in power. Mounting domestic and international pressure resulted in cosmetic changes and some quick high-profile arrests but Bangladeshi intelligence officials believe that the arrests are unlikely to undermine the militant groups entirely. Many Bangladeshis believe that a series of highly publicized mass surrenders of suspects were more political theatre than a genuine end to a reign of terror. The opposition also has its share of woes. In its obsession to unseat the Khaleda government, the Awami League had forged an unwieldy alliance with various opposition parties.

The result was that the fourteen-party coalition under Sheikh Hasina was expanded to nineteen parties, including two factions of Islami Oikya Jote led by Mizbahur Rahman Choudhury and Allama Azizul Hage, along with the Islamic Front of Bangladesh. In the process, Hasina made some odd and controversial choices. The Khaleda government's refusal to drop corruption charges against him induced former President and jatiya Party leader General Ershad to forge an alliance with the Awami League-led opposition coalition. Likewise, despite its secular orientation, Hasina forged a partnership with Khilafat Majlish Bangladesh, signing an agreement that if voted to power her government was committed to the introduction of Sharia.

### **5.15 Systemic Collapse in Bangladesh**

If initially there was no manifestation of popular displeasure against some of the unprecedented moves by the interim government it was merely a reflection of the people's disappointment with their mainstream leadership. But the caretaker government is a team of appointed technocrats. The constitution restricts their scope to holding free and fair elections within three months but more than five months after Khaleda Zia demitted office Bangladesh does not have an election schedule. By undertaking revision of the voters' list it has postponed elections indefinitely. This political crisis has undermined various political institutions in the country. The current situation would necessitate the two main political parties modifying or even abandoning some of their erstwhile positions. For example, Khaleda Zia's son Tarique looks likely to be marginalised within the BNP. The Awami League had to pull out of its last-minute alliance with Khilafat Majlish Bangladesh. The caretaker government has initiated actions against both the BNP and the Awami League to expose their corruption. Popular endorsement of this initiative has restrained rival politicians from taking to the streets.

The appointment of a neutral administration under Fakhruddin Ahmed also appears to have weakened the support enjoyed by the right-wing religious elements. Without the backing of the establishment, tacit or otherwise, the religious elements will have their wings clipped. Also, the caretaker government's actions appear to be directed against the two principal parties. So long as they are not targets of the crackdown, the religious parties can safely lie low. From the time it returned to the barracks in 1991, the military has not shown signs of returning to the political arena. External pressures, especially from the UN, the US, and the EU, cautioned the military against returning to active politics. The present change has vested the military with a more focused and specific role in the country's politics. The emergency was introduced and enforced with its backing. But if the caretaker government collapses, proves ineffective, or becomes unpopular, the military may not remain a silent spectator.

### **5.16 Bangladesh Army Mutiny of 2009 and Civil Military Relations**

On 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2009, Bangladesh witnessed a heavy combat in the military headquarters of Dhaka and it had spreaded to other military units in the country. At the very first day, mutiny killed 50 soldiers as a result of the continuous fighting, including senior commanders of the Bangladesh Rifles. Once the battle started, lower-ranking soldiers took some of the higher ranking officers as hostage. They also took control of some of the public conveniences including a shopping mall near soldiers Dhaka barracks. On second day of the rebellion, the mutiny had spread across the country and as a result there were the involvements of more military barracks throughout Bangladesh (Halim 2010).

As the hours passed, mutiny spread to other parts of the country and the mutineers fought in the Teknaf region and forced the unit commander to flee. Later, fight erupted at Bangladesh Rifle bases in Cox Bazar, Chittagong, Naikhongchari, Sylhet, Rajshahi and Naogaon. As per the reports BDR took control of the 12 of the 64 border districts. The civilian system was also quick to respond and sent armored units of the army to tackle the situation, later, the rebels surrendered to the forces. But it resulted in the death of 148 people, most of them are military officers. In October, 2012, a military court found 723 of the border guards of the former Bangladeshi Rifles (BDR) guilty of joining and leading the mutiny, and imposed jail sentences on the mutineers. Dhaka's Metropolitan Sessions Court Judge Md. Akhtaruzzaman also sentenced 157 others, mostly border guards, to life in prison while 271 people were acquitted (Rabindranath 2016). The influential military was not happy over the response of the government, which did not allow troops to attack the border guards' headquarters in Dhaka where military commanders were killed. Even the Human rights activists have criticised Bangladesh for such a mass trial, saying it will not ensure justice.

Thinkers cited two main reasons for the revolt; primarily, soldiers issues of pay and living conditions and secondly, the mutiny could be highly politically motivated to destabilize the politically established system. It was a fact that BDR, one of the biggest military outfit which protect its long border, had been provided with very meager salary and working conditions. Most of the soldiers are from socially and economically marginalized areas. A high level of disturbance and dis-satisfaction of soldiers made them to rebel against the government. At the same time, it was also reported that the mutiny was aimed to destabilize the already elected

government in power. The year 2009 was a period which characterized by peaceful transfer of power from caretaker to newly elected government. But the opposition rejected the election result on the ground that it was undemocratic where a huge chunk of population did not participate in election.

Here, once could see BDR mutiny was the result of either Bangladesh government's incapability to provide better material facilities to the serving unit or a political plot or conspiracy to disdain already elected Sheikh Hasina's government which came to power just two months before the mutiny. Whatever be the reasons, the incident could be seen as a scratch in country's bettering civil military relations. Post 2009 Bangladesh saw the trial of culprits and attempts to regain civilian supremacy on military or balanced civil military relations in Bangladesh. Still, many scholars have the opinion that Bangladesh seems vulnerable to military coups and mutinies.

#### **5.17 Civil Military Relations during Sheikh Hasina Regime (2009-2013)**

In December, 2008, following two years of a military-backed caretaker government, the Awami League (AL) secured a landslide victory with 229 of 300 votes in parliament and AL-led alliance achieved 262 seats. The election was widely acknowledged to be the fairest election in the country's history and the AL had its '15 pages: Charter for Change' as its election manifesto with avowed commitment of bringing positive changes to all institutions, politics and culture etc. in the country. However, after forming the government the Awami League started taking various decisions in parliament and outside unilaterally and without any participation of the opposition. No fruitful step was taken by the Government or the Awami League to take back BNP, the main opposition into parliament to practice and develop participatory democracy. The Awami League did not take any lesson from the experience of the two-year army-caretaker government although there were huge expectations from common people that incidents of putting both Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia in prison, torturing and sending abroad two sons of Khaleda Zia, putting into imprisonment hundreds of political leaders for corruption charges would lead the Awami League to bring positive changes into the institutions of democracy and governance (Halim 2010).

However, to the utter dismay of majority people the Awami League Government did not bring any positive changes to the institutionalization of democracy; it rather destroyed those built up by the army-backed caretaker government and obviously, it will have far reaching consequences

on civil military relations in Bangladesh. It would be better to discuss the development institution wise....

*(i) The Parliament:* The first negative element of functioning of the parliament was the absence of the opposition party throughout its tenure. Parliament is the biggest and most important institution of democracy. It was incumbent upon the Awami League Government to take steps so that all opposition parties take part in parliamentary proceeding. Without the participation of the opposition, debate and discussion in the parliamentary proceeding, it cannot be said that a parliament is a representative one. There was parliament during the whole tenure of AL Government but it was neither representative nor participatory.

*(ii) Committee System in Parliament:* Apart from law making, parliament has another important function of controlling the executive and this is done by committee system. There is a permanent standing committee against each ministry and the main function of that standing committee is to oversee the spending of public money and other works by ministries. If the committee detects any corruption or misuse of public money, it can take action, recommend for taking action against responsible persons in the ministry. During the first two and half year of Awami League governance no parliamentary standing committee was formed. With regard to formation of standing committee BNP as opposition party wanted to have proportional representation in all committees. However, the Awami League Government refused the offer and as a result BNP did not participate in committee formation. At the very end of its term the Awami League Government formed committees with their own MPs most of whom had conflict of interest in the affairs or the committee functioning and as such the whole tenure of the Government, the executive functioned completely in an uncontrolled way giving more scope of corruptions and misdeeds by government bodies and ministries.

Apart from parliamentary standing committee on ministries, there are three important permanent parliamentary committees in the parliament: (I) Public Accounts Committee, (ii) the Public Undertaking Committee, and (3) Committee on Estimates. These three committees work like watchdog against government's spending, budget allocation, estimates of various government departments on various financial matters. However, as usual during the whole tenure of the Awami League Government, the performances of these committees have not been visible at all.



*(iii) Formation of the Election Commission and its Independence:* The impartiality, integrity, independence and ability of the Election Commission shown during one-eleven-led 9 parliamentary election had the most applauding support and confidence among general people, national and international organizations. The Huda Commission took various positive initiatives as a result of which the Election Commission turned into a very strong neutral election watchdog. Although the 9th Parliament election and the subsequent formation of Awami League Government was smooth and peaceful because of the leadership of the Election Commission, the Awami League Government in its five year tenure brought about two types of changes which gradually turned the Election Commission into a subservient ineffective institution to the Government.

First, at the expiry of Huda Commission the Awami League formed a search committee consisting of people who were loyal and partisan to Awami League and this so-called search committee recommended for appointment as Commissioner and Chief Election Commissioner of such persons who eventually turned out to be politically partisan and the Election Commission in fact became a Awami League party institution. This Rokib Commission could be compared with the Aziz Commission during BNP era. The Rokib Commission did everything in line with the Awami League Government decision and did not exercise or show any institutional set-up with impartial leadership. Second, the Rokib Commission did not implement any of the recommendations made by the Huda Commission before it expired its term. Further, it did not take any step to implement those recommendations.

Third, the Awami League Government made further amendments to the Representations of the Peoples' Order, 1972 which weakened the strength of the Election Commission and unfortunately the Election Commission did not make any protest. Although the Awami League Government has since its beginning started claiming that it believed in independence of the Election Commission, in fact, like its predecessor BNP Government, it did not take any effective step to make the Election Commission independent. The Election Commission did not consult with the main opposition BNP before declaring schedule for 9th parliamentary election; it rather declared schedule as per ruling party Awami League's dictation and hold one party election

which has created another blackest chapter of voter-less election in the history of electoral democracy in Bangladesh.

*(iv) Weakening the independence of the Anti-Corruption Commission:* One of the avowed manifestos of the Awami League was to fight against corruption and since its formation of government it started claiming building up strengths and independence of the Anti-Corruption Commission. However, in fact, the Awami League Government did not want to see that the Anti-Corruption Commission should work independently. Anti-Corruption Commission has taken most of its decisions in prosecution in accordance with the government's dictation and most of the cases have been kept running against MPs and Members of the opposition parties. According to a report, the Anti-Corruption Commission has dropped 3053 cases in the year of 2012-2013 of which most of the cases were against Awami League MPs and members and loyal people. The Awami League Government has also amended the Anti-Corruption Commission drops 3000 graft cases. Many ruling party men favoured Anti-Corruption Commission Act by which provisions had been incorporated so that Anti-Corruption Commission cannot file corruption cases against government servants without the sanction from the Government, although these provisions have been scrapped and declared invalid by the High Court Division. This judgment by the High Court Division substantiates that the Awami League Government, in clear violation of its election manifesto, did not want to make Anti-Corruption Commission as a strong, effective and neutral body to fight against corruption.

*(v) Withdrawal of thousands of criminal cases with political consideration:* In a completely competitive style following the questionable trends of the BNP Government, the Awami League Government also withdrew thousands of cases pending against Awami League MPs, and members and leaders and these cases included some gruesome murder cases also. By exercising this power of withdrawing of cases with political consideration the government has influenced and undermined the lower judiciary. This also substantiates that the lower judiciary is still dictated by the Law Ministry. This trend of withdrawal of criminal cases with political consideration has not only given a culture of impunity among political leaders, it encourages the culture of committing crimes under the banner of political coverage. This trend has also been leaving thousands of victims of crimes vulnerable, apprehended and unprotected. At the same

time, this trend has the effect of diminishing rule of law and independence of judiciary in the country.

**(vi) *Non-disclosure of wealth statement of MPs and Ministers:*** Awami League leader and the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina both before and after the 9th parliament election publicly and repeatedly that she would take positive steps to disclose wealth statements of MPs and Ministers. During the whole fiveyear tenure of governance she took no step to fulfill this commitment. No wealth statement of MPs or Ministers was presented even before parliament let alone before public.

**(vii) *Dynasticism into Politics and Democracy:*** In an unexpected line with the trend of the previous BNP government Awami League head and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also did not hesitate to introduce dynastic elements into national politics and governance. Hasina herself has remained as the head of Awami League party, head of government, head of parliamentary party. Not only that, she also appointed her own son Sojib Waied Joy as her advisor which is just unconstitutional like the appointments of advisors. Further, it was common affairs for her to add family members in her foreign entourage which is nothing but blunt example of misuse of public money.

**(viii) *Politicizing the Supreme Court:*** In the same manner as the BNP Government did during 2001-2006 the Awami League Government has also politicized the Supreme Court. In the appointment of new judges in the High Court Division and also in the appointment of judges in the Appellate Division political consideration was paramount and as a result the Supreme Court as an independent constitutional organ of the state has lost its image, prestige and impartiality.

**(ix) *Politicizing the post of the President:*** The post of the President of the Republic is a separate constitutional organ and a separate institution of democracy. This institution, in fact, maintains a balance between the legislative and the executive and these balancing arrangements have been made in the very constitution of the Republic. However, very unfortunately following undemocratic trend of the BNP government, the Awami League government has also politicized this institution. Neither of the two Presidents i.e., Mr. Zillur Rahman and Md. Abdul Hamid could rise above party politics and governmental decisions even in cases where they could

exercise this power constitutionally. For instance, even after taking oath as the President, Mr. Zillur Rahman stated categorically indicating Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, “My leader can never commit any mistake.” In the same manner, when the Awami League Government at its very end of term passed the most unwanted and controversial Anti-Corruption Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2013, all civil societies requested the President not to sign the bill as the bill was undemocratic and anti-independence to Anti-Corruption Commission. Very unfortunately the President signed the bill unhesitatingly and without thinking for a moment. Of course, the High Court Division subsequently declared this legislation illegal and void.

*(x) Politicizing the post of the Speaker:* The post of Speaker is another separate and balancing organ of democracy. Once an MP takes oath as the Speaker, he or she becomes independent and cannot take any decision or play any role in line with any political party. Unfortunately neither of the two speakers elected during the tenure of the Awami League Government could raise their status above the party-consideration. It is also true that the ruling Awami League Government did not assist them to work independently. For instance, while in a debate on the floor former speaker Mr. Abdul Hamid discovered that some MPs were making unnecessary noise and pointing to this the speaker ordered, “Honorable MPs! The House seems to have turned into a fish market.” No sooner than the speaker could finish his statement, some ministers in the very front of the leader of the House Sheikh Hasina started shouting against speaker saying, e.g. “Honorable Speaker! If the House seems like fish market, who is the contractor of this market..?” If a speaker is attacked with such type of abusing words, it is really difficult for a speaker to work impartially. In a more degrading manner, when Dr. Shirin Sharmin took oath as the speaker, she made a political comment on 153 MPs who were elected without any vote. She stated that, “10th Parliament will continue its functioning in continuing democratic process.” Where no right of vote of people was allowed or exercised and 153 MPs were picked up without any election, it remains questionable whether a neutral speaker can state that 10th Parliament is a continuation of democratic process.

*(xi) Politicizing the Local Government Institutions:* As the previous BNP Government did politicize every institutions of local government, so did the Awami League government. The interference of the local MPs over local government bodies has been kept as usual hindering any smooth progress and development of the local government bodies. Neither of the

recommendations left by the Huda Commission prepared during this government was implemented by the Awami League Government in this regard.

*(xii) Creation of unconstitutional and unelected posts paving way for un-democratisation:*

First, since the BNP Government in 2001 the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia started appointing advisors who were not constitutional posts but they were given ministerial status and privileges and they all were allowed to sit in the cabinet meetings also. Compared to the BNP Government the Awami League Government has given more appointments to the unelected and unconstitutional posts. These appointments of unelected advisors has not only damaged the institutionalization of democracy, but also has provided concrete proof to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's repeated promises that she would not allow any unelected element in anywhere of the administration. Sheikh Hasina repeatedly promised in public that none but elected representatives will be given place to her administration.

She defended that according to the judgment of the 13th Amendment case there was no scope to appoint any unelected person; nor was there any scope to hand over state power to any unelected people. However, in fact, the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a kind of naked violation of her promise and dictates of the judgment of the Appellate Division in 13th Amendment case had not only appointed unelected advisors to her cabinets but also appointed administrators to District Councils and Dhaka City Corporations. Thus she has not only abused her power but also violated the provisions of the Constitution and judgment of the Appellate Division. No step was taken either by the Anti-Corruption Commission or the Supreme Court against the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her abuse of power and violation of the apex court's judgment.

Secondly, it is not only the case that in the administration and local bodies the Awami League Government has nakedly violated the principles of representation. The Awami League Government has hold the 10th national parliament election without participation of the main opposition BNP; the military dictator H. M. Ershad was forcefully and in a dramatic way kept hostage in hospital and her wife Rawshan Ershad was forced to take part in the election to defraud the people that the election was participatory. It was, in fact, a show down of election; 153 MPs were declared elected without any election. These 153 MPs do not represent any portion of population. The Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina very farcically claims that these MPs

have been duly elected. More paradox is that in the whole process of electioneering the Election Commission worked as a back-up safeguard for undemocratic transition of power.

**(xiii) *Appointing an unelected person as Speaker of the National Parliament:*** When President Zillur Rahman died, the speaker of the parliament Mr. Abdul Hamid was appointed as the President of the Republic and Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury an unelected MP from women reserved seats was appointed as the Speaker. This appointment has also been questioned because she was not a directly elected MP. This is another glaring example of contradictory statement of the Prime Minister herself as she repeatedly committed not to appoint any unelected person in the administration. The 10th National Parliament is now being chaired by a person who is not representing any people. It does not require any explanation to state how farcically and undemocratically the functioning of this 10th Parliament is now being continued.

**(xiv) *Making Laws in the parliament by abusing public fund and without any debate and discussion:*** The 9th Parliament spoiled 104 crore taka on quorum crisis in the house. During the whole period of 5 years the total working hours of parliament was 1332 out of which 222 hours were spoiled. In the case of law making similar trend is evident. The 9th parliament enacted a total of 271 laws for which it spent 54 hours. As a result, for every law the parliament spent only 12 minutes which signifies that these 271 laws were not passed democratically after adequate deliberation and discussion.

**(xv) *Enactment of the most questionable 15th Amendment Act to the Constitution:*** With its assumption in power in January 2009, three specific juridical developments came to supplement the strength of the AL in favour of bringing Constitutional changes: (i) Judgment of the 5th Amendment case upholding the invalidation of the 5th Amendment of the Constitution (which legitimized the 1975 coup and subsequent military rule by General Ziaur Rahman up until the election of the second parliament); (ii) Judgment of 7th Amendment Case upholding the invalidation of the 7th Amendment of the Constitution (which had legitimized the 1982 coup), thus invalidating General Ershad's decrees under martial laws; and (iii) the Judgment of 13th Amendment Case declaring the provision of caretaker government- an instrument of free and fair election- void. With these three judgments in hand another factor worked as back-up strength and that was the sending most of the killers of Sheikh Mujib, the founding President of the Republic to gallows which dealt a body blow to the counter-revolution.

It is pertinent to mention here that by declaring the two periods of military rule unconstitutional and void and then declaring the provisions of Caretaker Government unconstitutional, the Supreme Court has played significant role in facilitating the change in the Constitution. Following this, many subsequently felt that the momentum was high for truly progressive secularization and democratization of the Constitution. There was scope once again to reinstate the four principles of the 1972 Constitution and in this regard left parties sent letter to JS body Chief for consideration also. Expectation was high among liberalist group of people and columnists who even wrote that we could soon be going back to secularism through some needed changes into constitution much trifled with over decades. Mr. Mahmudul Islam stated in his book that with these changes the stage was set for democracy to bloom but none is there to avail the opportunity.

However, to the utter dismay of the people the ruling Awami League again distorted the fundamental principles of nationalism, secularism and democracy by 15th Amendment the way was unexpected to many and the high expectation ended into an utter despair. Following major constitutional changes have been introduced by this Amendment. (1) Secular character of the State compromised: Secularism and state religion are self-contradictory and these two concepts cannot go hand in hand but the 15th Amendment has made it by force into the Constitution. Four specific changes have been brought in the Constitution in this regard. For details, please see author's book Amendments of the Constitution of Bangladesh: Legislative versus Judicial.

(ii) Four Fundamental Principles in the Preamble: The 15th Amendment has amended preamble of the Constitution with three basic changes of which one is restoring four principles of nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism. However, secularism is no longer secularism; it is now farcical Islamic secularism.

(iii) Punishment for offence of abrogation, suspension etc. of the Constitution (Art. 7A) (Constitutional Sedition).

(iv) Ban imposed on amending the preamble and its basic structure and some other important articles.

(v) Abolition of Caretaker Government System: Section 21 of the Constitution (15th Amendment) Act, 2011 states that “Chapter-IIA-Non-Party Caretaker Government” in the Constitution, shall be omitted.

(vi) The provision of Father of Nation and display of the Portrait of the Father of the Nation: The amendment has made specific provision including a new clause in Article 150(2) giving Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the country’s founding President, the title of “Father of the Nation to Bangladesh”, a provision the BNP termed as partisan. The issue of Father of the Nation is a historical fact and even the Constituent Assembly did not declare Mujib Father of the Nation. The issue of Father of the Nation which was inserted in the 4th Schedule of the Constitution for the first time by operation of the 4th Amendment revived after 36 years by the 15th Amendment will divide the nation further worsening the political instability - in Bangladesh. By inserting a historical matter into the Constitution, it seems the parliament exceeded its limit on law making.

(vii) The Judiciary: The whole Chapter I- The Supreme Court of Part IV of the Constitution (from articles 94 to 113) has been substituted. Substituting the whole Chapter-I in Part IV seems unnecessary since this has already been done by the Appellate Division in its judgment by way of condonation. The Appellate Division in 5th Amendment case made an appeal to the parliament with respect to restoring articles 115 and 116 to the original Constitution of 1972. The court observed specifically that until and unless the unamended Article 115 and 116 of the original Constitution are restored vesting the control of the subordinate judiciary in the Supreme Court, the separation of judiciary will remain a distant cry. However, the parliament did not bring this positive change in the 15th Amendment ignoring the observation of the court.

(viii) Insertion of Schedules 5, 6 and 7 in the Constitution: beyond the power of the parliament: This amendment has added three new Schedules in the Constitution: the 5th Schedule, 6th Schedule and 7th Schedule. All these schedules have been added with links in Article 150(2) which provides for transitional and temporary provisions. Schedule 5 protects historical 7th March Speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Schedule 6 protects Declaration of Independence by Mujib on 26th March, 1971 and Schedule 7 protects the Proclamation of Independence by Mujibnagar interim wartime government. Insertion of these three new



schedules in the body of the Constitution will bring before the nation some important questions to be decided by the judiciary.

(ix) Amendment of Transitional and Temporary provision in the 4th Schedule: This Amendment deleted clauses 3A, 6A, 6B, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 from the 4th Schedule. The erasing of clauses 21 seems questionable. Clause 21 omitted the protection given to the 11th Amendment of the Constitution. 11<sup>th</sup> Amendment ratified Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed's extra-constitutional appointment as the vice-president and the powers exercised and laws and ordinances made during the tenure that began after the fall of Ershad's regime in 1990. Did the 11<sup>th</sup> Amendment enacted in 1991 wrongly ratify Justice Shahabuddin's regime? How can one-party dominated parliament delete a protected part of the Constitution without assigning any reason? Can parliament do this? Does not it amount to destroying the Constitution? It remains to be seen how judicial intervention comes forward to accommodate these contradictions in the supreme law.

Constitutionality of the 15th Amendment The validity of the 15th Amendment seems questionable on two basic grounds: (i) Amendments of preamble, substitution of Article 2A, 4A, 12, 38 and insertion new article 7A and 7B may be challenged on the ground of destroying basic structure of the Constitution; (ii) By inserting three Schedules with historical facts, making a larger and vital part of the Constitution un-amendable forever including blocking the power of judicial review the parliament played the role of a constituent assembly and thereby it exceeded its limited power under the Constitution.

One of the major features with regard to the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh throughout the forty plus years show that there were always political pressure on armies to use its strength for political purpose. The ruling political parties are capable of constructing factions within army infavour of them. It was also a fact that para military force had formed during Mujibur Rahman's period to counter his political opponents and threats from army itself. Even the coming of Ershad and Zia can be interpreted as taking the political administration of Bangladesh by controlling the army unit of the country. During these military leaders period, there was attempt to politicize the military and militarize the politics. Various political, legal and technical committees had been filled with military heads and maximum allocation of national budget was allowed.

On the name of sophistication of military, numbers of treaties were signed and huge proportion of national budget had been allocated. The main motive was to quell the revolutionary army segments which were demanding more socio and economic role for military. By occupying relevant positions in the civilian system, military heads had used its professional skills to silence the opponents. Even after the re-introduction of democracy in 1991, one could find a number of incidences where the civilian leaders manipulating army's position to take revenge on political opponents. But what hampered civil military relations in Bangladesh are over politicization and factionalism in civilian system and the army. Bangladesh Nationalist Party had a legacy to claim in hampering civil military bond and Awami League used power domain to take political revenges on critics. The above paragraphs show that there were number of constitutional, legal, political and cultural attempts made by both two major parties to spoil civil military relations in Bangladesh.

### **5.18 Conclusion**

Throughout the political history of Bangladesh, military has been an integral part and continue to influence the political life. The nexus and close bond of civil military relations were formed at the time of Bangladesh struggle and it has institutionalized to some extent after Bangladesh got independence. The cooperation of civilian population and forces of the Mukti Bahini joined hands against the military establishment of erstwhile West Pakistan for two reasons; one was to prevent Pakistan army's crack down on Bengalis and second was to gain political freedom from Pakistan. Since the creation of Bangladesh, it has been visible that two major political parties use military to handle political crisis created by them. Pro Pakistan role of some of the political factions in the country and Awami League's national projection as secular party of all Bengali have direct repercussions on army for whenever they come on power, each takes revengeful stands on other. As Emajuddin Ahamed pointed out the contestation surfaced soon after the Liberation War: The fact that a large number of officers and jawans, throwing aside their professional norms and indignantly breaking the canons of military discipline and chain of command, rose against the establishment and joined the War, was itself a revolutionary step. Under normal circumstances, all of them would have been court-martialled, but after independence they became war heroes and were greeted with warm-hearted glee and pride by the nation.

It is a fact that Bangladesh freedom struggle and state's creation based on democratic principles cleared the gap between the civilians and armed forces. Both civilians and military personnel were aware of the nature of historically weak political leadership in East Bengal and inconsistent political institutions. Such bifurcations have led to confrontations between two segments of politically divided army and again led to the assassination of Mujib. The outcome was the initiation of military rule. Followed by a number of political and military moves and incidences military consolidated its influence on politics. The primary observation on militarization and assassination of Mujibur Rahman was first government to convert Bangladesh into a single party system. Soon after, Bangladesh had been witnessed several military rule and military rulers attempt to silence their opponents by using force and legal measures. From August 1975 to December 1990, Bangladesh remained under military rule, and it resulted in the beginning of a poorly managed civil military relations. Though there are constitutional and defence ministry obligations for military to follow, all remained unpracticed. In between, Bangladesh saw a new approach by military leaders to legalise their military rule by forming new political parties. Such legitimacy gaining attempts would be at two ways; to ensure a wider political role for the military and realization of the relevance of democratic governance. But military put its hands everywhere and through a number of means, the armed forces enhanced its influence and pressure.

Early political phases of Bangladesh have given army an impetus and stimulant role in the polity and society. But it was also lugged with generous patronization and generous offers. Eventually, the military secured an effective control and managing mechanism over non-military organisations. Bu the fall of General Ershad in the year 1990 saw a new twist where military started losing its grips on politics. In 1991, multiparty elections were introduced and two of three parties which dominated Bangladeshi politics had strong military connections, namely the BNP and Jatiya. Such unholy nexus and connections are seen when look at the increase in defence allocation by civilian governments and it was ensured to give continuous green signal to the armed forces. Though the military downplayed its political linkages in the post-1990 environment, it could be noted that army still enjoys political concessions and voice in the political structure of the country. But, anyway, there was shift happened when civilian control on

military got strengthened. The military has been used for nonmilitary functions and army has often been called to help the civilian administration in the restoration of law and order, relief and disaster management activities, and anti-terror campaigns.

It is also noted that civil-military equations and cooperations are moving in a zigzag way. During the second tenure of Khaleda Zia (2001-06), the army was actively involved in two law and order operations namely, Operation Clean Heart (16 October 2002–January 2003) and Operation Spider Web (20 July–14 August 2003). But army was blamed continuously for killing innocent people on the name of such operations. Two other factors have enabled the military to have a greater say in the running of the country. Firstly, Bangladesh has had three military governments headed by Khondakar Mustaque (1975), Ziaur Rahman (1977–81), and HM Ershad (1982–90). Besides these, there have been as many as 18 coup attempts between 1975 and 1990. Secondly, both military and civilian governments have been appointing retired service personnel at senior positions in the government and government-owned institutions. A large number of service officers have become diplomats, heads of government agencies or public operations.

Early militarized politics in Bangladesh, there were number of political appointments and as per a data on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1979, 25 of the 625 officers in the senior policy cadre, they are responsible for policy-making in the administrative secretariat, were military officers. Out of 101 chairmen of public corporations in June 1980, 42 were military officers or retired serviceman. It is reported that by January 1981, 22 of the 40 district superintendents and additional superintendents of police were army officers. More than that, 500 retired military officers were employed in industry, indenting business, foreign trade, and supply and contracts under the patronage of the government. It was also noted that only favourites in the military allotted residential plots and rest of them were ignored. Such practices have handicapped military and over politicized civilian administration.

Post 2000 Bangladesh politics exposed a new nature of military. It is found that the armed forces are engaged in number of other activities which are commercial in nature. Commercial ventures like Radisson Hotel in Dhaka is built on land owned by the army and the Rifles Square Mall that was one of the principal scenes of action during the Bangladesh Border Rifles (BDR) siege in February 2009 belongs to the military. Because of such business entrenchment and endeavors, the Bangladesh army contributes US\$ 600 million annually to the Bangladeshi economy.

Ultimately, what it shows and reveals is the extra space for army in Bangladesh which was also the result of bargaining power of army and army's big role in national liberation movement.

Thus, civil-military relations in Bangladesh are characterized by number of phases in which an unhealthy contest between military encroachment upon politics and healthy popular opposition to authoritarian trends are also visible. In Bangladesh, there were occasions people demanded the army to intervene in politics and administration of the country. And there were occasions too people kept tight army inside the barrack. But what is essentially and immediately needed is substantial and balanced civil military relations for that military has to strictly follow the civilian prospects and civilian administrations have to strictly follow and fulfill the constitutional obligations. Moreover, people's participation in the democratic procedures of the country would also be essential. They need to make the nature of governance and government more legal and democratic, for that a higher number of voter turnout in each elections is necessary. These days such patterns are on increasing roll in Bangladesh. From 55.35 per cent in 1991, it increased to 74.96 per cent in 1996, and was 74.5 per cent in 2001.<sup>10</sup> In 2008, 82 per cent of the registered voters took part in the Ninth Jatiya Sangsad elections. So, it is concluded that a high level of participation of people in the political reforms of the country create a strong government to generate strong political reforms, which would finally help to maintain a balanced civil military relations in Bangladesh.

## **Chapter VI**

### **Changing Civil Military Relations:**

#### **Civil Society Perspectives**

## Chapter VI

### Changing Civil Military Relations: Civil Society Perspectives

#### 6.1 Prelude

Researchers categorized the nature and issues of civil military relations in various ways based on the political developments, political phases and gaps in implications of the constitutional provisions' vindications in Bangladesh. Much of the studies, research reports and research articles preoccupied with Samuel Huntingdon's dictum on civil military relations or E. Finers' analysis of civil military relations through the lens of political culture of the concerned countries. But academic endeavors more into the role of progressive forces like Mukti Bahini and other revolutionary forces combined with the political mobilization of East Bengalis under the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman accentuate the fact that instead of British, India and Pakistan legacy, Bangladesh had evaporated and developed their own political and cultural elements in creating their own style of civil military relations. The ardent fights of Mukti Bahini against Pakistan's bourgeois army and their military elitism, the uncompromised political perceptions of Awami League had actually nurtured a different nature of civil military relations in post independent Bangladesh.

The chapter identified the relevance of such historical concoction of political or civilian and military elements in the pre independent struggle for freedom and the intervention of civilian and military wings into the realms of both. It tries to elucidate the historical and post independent nature of civil military relations by applying Marxist Leninist Analysis of army and civil military relations. As an expansion of the same theoretical tool, the study developed three stages of civil military relations. But the crux of this study relies on while explaining the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh through a new trajectory of four phases: Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced. At the end of this chapter, observations and responses of academicians, research scholars, retired military personnel's and students have been added to test whether the outcome of this study through above mentioned four stages could be replicated or not in the context of Bangladesh.

## **6.2 Marxist-Leninist Understanding of Armed Forces in Developing Countries: The Case of Bangladesh**

The socio political character, functions and social role of the armed forces of the developing countries and of the young post-colonial countries which emerged from and after World War second is a new and rather complicate subject in the theory of civil military relations and military power. There is confusion concerning their nature, functions and classifications and the views change constantly. This confusion may be exemplified by the fact that the studies on the armies of young national states and armies of the liberated countries require a detailed understanding and explanation of the societies they originate. Such a construction means that the armies in question generally do not fit the traditional image of the capitalist armies, nor can they be included in the category of the socialist armies. Therefore, they constitute the third type of armed forces. Here in the context of Bangladesh, the third generalization can be particularized as Bangladesh posits a new type of army which emerged with the merging of East Bengali unit of unified Pakistan and Mukti Bahini. The blend of army and para military forces into a professional one particularly after the independence has positive and adverse impacts on civil military relations in Bangladesh.

According to the Marxist-Leninist understanding, the social functions of any army are determined by its class character which depends on the nature of the class or class state whose instrument the army is (Lider 1981). In many cases, this connection is difficult to establish. The difficulty begins with the analysis of the origin of the armies of the developing countries. The classical exposition is simple: one class deprives the other one of power and creates a new army for the promotion of its external and internal interests. In this way, feudal revolution created the feudal army and the capitalist army emerged from the bourgeoisie revolution. The proletariat revolution resulted in the creation of a proletarian army which has become a nationwide socialist one. The armies of the developing countries do not fit in this picture too. Here one could compare Mukti Bahini's and Awmi League's role in Bangladesh liberation war as mobilisers of proletarian movement against a bourgeoisie administration, Pakistan.

Most of the developing countries have undergone revolutionary changes of a national and social character. They have acquired political independence and destroyed many of the feudal and colonial socio-economic relations. However, in several cases, neither the revolutionary



transformations and nor the society which has emerged from them have had a clear cut class character. The democratic revolutions have been intermixed with the socialist transformations and both have had in the background the national liberation from the colonial rule, which has also been viewed as a kind of revolutionary change. Bangladesh also had the similar story to compare. The political mobilization of East Bengalis by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for a separate nationhood with the help of progressive force actually had socialist interpretations. Once after independence, democratic reforms and principles had been mixed in the creation of a new state. So, there is contradiction between the background and new establishments and same contradictions could be visible in civil military relations in Bangladesh.

Several of these societies were not classical societies consisting of the two main antagonistic classes, in other words, they did not fit the classical Marxist-Leninist typology of socio-economic formations. In particular they were not capitalistic societies in the traditional sense; there existed neither a strong industrial bourgeoisie nor a matured working class. On the contrary the intermediate social strata- the trade bourgeoisie, officials and intelligentsia-played an increasing role in the economic and political life. The East Bengali movement during Bangladesh Liberation War composed of all these social strata mentioned above. These premises have continued to influence social development in the post-revolutionary period: neither bourgeoisie nor working class have suddenly become clearly shaped organisms with clearly defined class interests and with strong leaderships. This has begun a slow and gradual process of re-shaping the social structure and of crystalizing the main social forces. After the establishments of new system in Bangladesh, the representation of all these intermediate social strata were seem low which resulted in socio, political and economic disturbances.

In several under developed states, the armed forces have become almost independent social bodies and the only ones which are sufficiently organized to be able to take effective political action. The cadre of officers has achieved a strong position in the intelligentsia and has begun to play a significant role in the political life. In effect, the army has gained an unorthodox position: that of the possessor or one of the possessors of power and not merely in its instrument. It has become a subject of politics and not merely one of its means. Another peculiarity of the unorthodox position of armed forces was that the population has regarded army as symbol of sovereignty, as the body which makes a nation out of tribes, castes and other social groups, as the

center of education and modern technology and often also as the bearer of modern socio-political ideas. These few peculiarities would be sufficient to raise certain problems for Marxist-Leninist theory which could not be easily explained by the orthodox teaching on army. So here, Bangladesh case has been exhibiting several sane peculiarities as explained by Marxist Leninist thinkers particularly on the role of army and its impacts on civil military relations. Before independence, the army in Bangladesh had more political role and the civilian leaders wished that after independence army can be used for socio, economic and political transformations of Bangladesh. What happened with Bangladesh's political system and civil military relations was contradictory and still it experiences bitter tastes.

### **6.3 Newly Independent Countries and Marxist Leninist Lens on Armed Forces**

The ebullient first years of the national liberation movement saw the emergence of number of new states. This was presented as the great triumph of the Marxist Leninist theory which predicted such a development and which hoped to gain new allies in its world competition with imperialism. The general assessment of the new armies was positive. In the studies of the armies of the new countries, the Marxist – Leninist thinkers attempted to cope with the diversity of their socio-political character by applying various criteria. One was the way in which a particular army was created. Here a distinction was made between the armed forces which emerged in the course of the national liberation struggle and those which were organized by the puppet regimes in countries which achieved independence without a prolonged armed struggle.

The first group was also a differentiated one. A distinction was made between the armies of those countries where the communist parties were the leading force in the national liberation struggle and those where they were aligned with other parties. Rebel armies born in some semi-colonial countries in the course of the struggle against both the puppet regimes and their allies, the colonialist armed forces, constituted a third sub group. The second group included armies either formed on the basis of the previous national units of the colonialist armed forces or new ones organized by the puppet regimes. And also these armed forces were regarded as having various socio-political characteristics dependent on the influence of the progressive social forces in the given country.

The general idea underlying the evaluation of particular armies was simple: the greater the influence of communist parties, or at least of other progressive social forces, the more active was the role of the particular armies in social transformations, if the communist parties were the leading force, the national liberation revolution could be transformed into a socialist one. The external function was said to correspond to the internal role of the armies and was considered either peaceful and progressive or aggressive and reactionary. From the earlier years of the history of the young national states, the relation between the armies and social forces which were considered their leading force or even disponent was far from the classical simple picture of armies as an instrument of classes or class states. This could be said of both the progressive and the reactionary groups of armies. While in a few countries in the progressive groups the new army could be seen as a direct instrument of the victorious classes, fully subordinated to the communist leadership and contributing to the socialist transformations, in others they became self-dependent forces and afterwards played a reactionary role.

At the same time, while some armies of the reactionary regimes, either strengthened the rule of the bourgeoisie or even closely linked to the former colonialist powers or to the USA, others led by progressive officers overthrew the puppet regimes and initiated certain democratic transformations. The general picture was even more obscured by the fact that in several countries reactionary military coups overthrew the democratic governments. In order to explain such unexpected developments, some writers observed that the relationship between an army and the class which is supposed to be its leading force is always complex and characterized by several intermediate links and it is dynamic, changing and different in various periods. While in the course of the national liberation struggle, the army is usually closely linked to society and reflects its national and social structure, i. e. it is directed by the same social forces which lead the struggling camp, in the liberated country it becomes an apparently autonomous part of the state apparatus and performs important non-military functions. Although it continues to represent definite class interests, it does so only in the final analysis. While in every day policy it behaves as a bureaucratic body governed by its own laws and resisting some direct orders from its disponent.

When the social structure clarifies, the state apparatus finally becomes an instrument of the governing class and armed forces are assigned to their normal position. For instance armies

originally led by progressive classes will finally become again their instrument. The armies of the post-colonial states were often called-en bloc- armies of the young national countries and the principal difference between them and the capitalist armies was emphasized. It was a reflection of a global assessment of the new states which were regarded as inimical to the Western imperialist states and thus sometimes viewed as a vast zone of peace. The generally positive assessment was reflected in the term armies of the national liberation revolution. These are generally characterized as expressing the interests of the majority of the people as being the instrument of the state in the struggle against foreign and domestic reactionary forces and as promoting social progress. They perform two functions: internally they protect the revolutionary gains and externally they defend independence and national sovereignty against the imperialist states.

#### **6.4 The Reassessment and the Two Kinds of Classification**

In the late sixties the two processes which in classical military theory had been inseparably connected, were seemingly separated: the origin of the army and its subsequent role in the social development, i.e. following the national liberation. As to the former, the picture became more diversified and in some studies four kinds of new armies were pointed out:

- 5) The armies inherited from the period when the countries in question were formally independent but remained under a strong colonial influence.
- 6) Armies inherited from the colonial powers.
- 7) Armies which emerged in the course of the national liberation struggle.
- 8) Armies created after the independent states were created (Lider 1981: 67-69).

Such a classification ignored the social political forces which created the armies or led them in their struggle. As to the role of armies in social development, several studies painted a black and white picture. This reflected the set-backs in some countries: the radical and pro-Soviet regimes gave way to military leaderships which abandoned that policy. The changes became so numerous and so rapid that Soviet writers, apparently tiring of the constant change in the character of the armies from progressive to reactionary and occasionally in the contrary direction, made a general sketch consisting of two extremes and resembling the traditional scheme. Thus, armed forces of the post-colonial states were divided into two categories: reactionary and progressive. The

armies of most Latin American and some African countries, for instance, were described as the foreign legions of the Western powers, as instruments of imperialism used for the suppression of the national liberation movement in their own and neighbouring countries.

It was stressed that the struggle between reactionary and progressive forces also occurred within particular armies and that the victory of one of the adversaries determined the role of the army in the domestic evolution: several armies contributed to establishing reactionary regimes supported by the imperialist states, others held up the development of their countries along the socialist path and saved them from being plundered by foreign monopolies. This assessment has become a formal two item classification. The armed forces of the liberated, or post-colonial, countries are divided into two main groups: the armies of the liberated countries of the so-called socialist orientation, and those of the capitalist orientation. The armies of Algeria, Burma, Guinea, Iraq, Yemen, Congo, and Ethiopia are mentioned as examples of the former group, while most Latin American and several Asian armies are included in the latter.

In countries with a socialist orientation, the leading social forces are called the forces of popular democracy and social liberation. They focus on the development of state industry, of agriculture co-operatives and the nationalisation of foreign firms. The struggle for a fully democratic army is given the greatest attention. The armies use the experience of the Soviet armed forces and often take advantage of their material support. In the capitalist-oriented countries, there is a mixture of capitalist development and the remnants of feudal system. Armed forces are the main instrument of internal reaction and imperialism against the mass movement striving towards national and social liberation. They participate in wars against other peoples, and thus appear as an instrument of United States' neo-colonial policy.

This classification of armies reflects the view that the developing countries do not represent a new type of socio-economic and political system with its own path of development. It has been stated that in a world which is divided between two opposing systems and which is in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism no third path of social development is possible. No third world alongside the capitalist world and the socialist world exists. Each country in what has been called the Third World must make its choice between capitalism and in fact the overwhelming majority have done so. Among developing countries, states which are following the capitalist path and states which have chosen the socialist orientation are already coming together.

Simultaneously there can and will be a gradual erosion of their commonalty as a result of some developing countries associating with the world socialist system while others join the group of the developed capitalist countries.

Some writers repeat the traditional assessment of all young national states as anti-imperialist and progressive. Others tend to generalise the fact that new reactionary coups keep occurring and regard this phenomenon as an intrinsic feature of post-liberation development in these countries. Still others, to avoid having to explain the constantly unexpected shifts in the role of the particular armies, present both contrary tendencies as increasing: there is a growing tendency to involve armies in the accomplishment of economic and social progressive transformations and on the other hand, the number of the counter revolutionary actions initiated by the reactionary military also increases.

### **6.5 Assessing Civil Military Relations through Three Stages: The Case of Bangladesh**

Marxist Leninist thinkers, military writers and theorists are aware of their having a specific concept of civil military relations which is quite different from the traditional one and from contemporary ideas. They connect this difference not only with the different interests of the countries of the socialist camp and those of the Western powers. They also relate it to the very process of formulating ideas and theories in social sciences. They posit that the position taken by the theoretician in solving particular scientific problems is guided by a definite ideology, specifically by political philosophy and it depends on what it is needed and would be accepted by social forces which he consciously or unconsciously represents. While the universal validity of this assumption would be questioned by many Western scholars, it must be taken into account when left inclined countries are analysed. Any of the left inclined countries army system and civil military relations cannot be interpreted without reference to Marxist Leninist ideology.

As an expansion of Marxist Leninist analysis on army and society, this study logically develops three stages of civilian military life. To be precise, the study interprets Marxist Leninist understanding on army and civil military relations, in countries which are created based on religion, language, and ethnicity etc., nurtures on the foundations of three interpretations. First, the role of army in assisting proletariats or common mass to gain socio-economic and political freedom from bourgeoisie or colonial masters or imperialist leaders or any ruling regimes;

second, role of army in the socio economic and political transformation of society; and third, reactionary or revolutionary role of army in stabilizing the civilian system. One could easily locate these three stages of civil military relations in the political life of Bangladesh.

Erstwhile East Bengal situations under the constant army crackdown of Pakistan marked as the beginning of a new phase in which east Bengali segments started thinking of forming a progressive group namely Mukti Bahini. The Mukti Bahini was a voluntary formation of east Bengalis to fight against Pakistan administration. Here one could compare the position of Mukti Bahini comprised of east Bengalis as a progressive group of proletariats and Pakistan administration as bourgeoisie. As an expansion of bourgeoisie's influence or reactionary group, Razakar's, group of people who supports and fights for the establishment of bourgeoisie dominated society, a pro-bourgeoisie wing joined the battle. With respect to east Bengalis, skills, training and strategies were provided to them by a pro-proletariat, India. Mukti Bahini had been loaded with several agendas; among them the crucial was to expel bourgeoisie and establish a society where east Bengalis rights, demands and concerns are placed more important. With an aim to establish a just society where socio-economic and political transformation would happen smoothly, Mukti Bahini engaged in a severe war with Pakistan army and Razakars. The dream came into being in 1971 and the joined operation of east Bengali soldiers, Mukti Bahini and India given the birth of a new nation in South Asia, Bangladesh. As stated above, the reactionary role of army and developing a balanced civil military relations as the first stage of new analysis have proven to be right here. The preliminary observation on the creation of Bangladesh through this newly developed Marxist Leninist frame would justify other two points in the coming paragraphs.

Once the establishment of proletarian society or creation of a new state based on rights and equality, done, there would be two requirements; civilian system has to form a government representing the proletariat truly; and converting the role of military from reactionary to an active participant in the socio-economic and political transformations of the society. Technically, the new state of Bangladesh had qualified both these aspects, but in vindication, state found several impediments. Bangladesh unfortunately has become a country which witnessed new bourgeoisie, elected representatives, within the system. Actually, new bourgeoisie were the people who led the proletarian revolution or independence struggle. But once after the independence, situations

turned vice versa. They had been curtailing political freedom when they gained steering wheel of the society and fought each other. Military had been mismanaged and disdained its credibility. The role of military in transforming socio-economic and political status of Bengalis into a better level had been reduced to just a politicized one.

The early years of Mujibur Rahman and his regime had drastically damaged civil military system in the country. Military was controlled by politicized military personnel and over ambitious military officers went into the extreme of taking power of the state. It should be noted that the new state of Bangladesh, unlike Pakistan, was created on the basis of democratic principles rather than any religious idea. But what basically pushed Bangladesh into a trauma situation, answers and interpretations are many. The presence of razakars still in the society, the rift between repatriated and participated soldiers, over politicization etc. can be some reasons. It is also to be noted that there are several constitutional obligations and provision to maintain civil military relations balanced and stable. But the political history of Bangladesh reveals that neither politicians keep any adherence to such legalities nor military prefers to come under the bloc. So, the fact of the matter is the second stage of this studies' analysis state that military has a positive and crucial role in the socio economic and political transformation. But in Bangladesh, the situations seemed more intricate and abstruse. There should be genuine environment maintained by the system to promote society into progressive level. Bangladesh lacked that environment and such situations continued. At the same time, it is also proved that a better civil military relation could only give the basic foundation for a peaceful Bangladesh.

Third stage of new analysis is military's progressive or revolutionary role in balancing the civilian system. Before going into details, two questions need to be addressed; first, why situations are prone to imbalanced civilian system; and second, why military needs to intervene. It is not an exaggeration to say that Bangladesh seems a politically fragile country till a point of time. Civilian systems lost its civility and forget to initiate flagship welfare and development policies, programmes and schemes for its own people. The state was limbering and drooping in terms of hearing the calls of common mass. Instead, bourgeoisie's or ruling segments of society had been indulging in ego based politics and personal revenges. The proletariats have no options except to call for military intervention. The 2007-2008 Bangladesh and even before and after that, military had to intervene and strived to act as a savior. The famous Minus Two Formula



was a recent example for such military's intervention in balancing the system. Military backed caretaker government could be interpreted, not as new experiment in democracy, the role of military as a reformer and the role of military as final resort of proletariats to make their unheard voice heard.

Here, it would also be relevant to discuss why military needs to intervene. As per the understanding of Marxist Leninist analysis army which born out of national liberation revolution represents as expressing the interests of the majority of the people including peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie, national intelligentsia and a nascent working class as being the instrument of the state in the struggle against foreign and domestic reactionary forces and as promoting social progress. They perform two functions; internally they protect the revolutionary gains and externally they defend independence and national sovereignty against the imperialist states. So, here in the context of Bangladesh, army has been assigned with certain responsibilities, even though not mentioned it in constitution. Whenever state as an instrument of governing elite ignores to deliver its primary and basic functions, army and common man are supposed to make the state system more responsible to the needs of the people. Therefore, the newly developed three stages of army's intervention in civilian system for the betterment of society can be replicated in the context of Bangladesh. These aspects of left inclined analysis could be well understood in coming paragraphs with more evidence based information from Bangladesh context.

#### **6.6 Assessing Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh through a New Trajectory: Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced**

Here, the study suggests a new trajectory of four different stages to measure, analyse and understand the nature and issues in civil military relations in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is demographically Muslim majoritarian state but legally and politically it maintained socialist inclinations since the beginning. One could easily find huge contradictions in the working principles of Bangladeshi state and it was multiplied with the rift between the participated and repatriated army segments in the state. All these contradictions and soft authoritarian nature of early leaders put civil military relations always in the edge of confusions and chaos. The newly developed trajectory of for stages would help to reduce the incongruities in understanding and analyzing the nature and issues in civil military relations in Bangladesh.

**Table 11**

**Forms of Government and Nature of Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh**

Forms of Government	Periods	Nature of Civil Military Relations
Authoritarian (Pakistan era)	1947-1971	Progressive
Parliament Democracy	1971-175	Trivial
Military Autocracy	1975-1981	Trivial
Military Autocracy	1982-1990	Trivial
Parliamentary Democracy	1991-1996	Transitory
Parliamentary Democracy	1996-2001	Transitory
Parliamentary Democracy	2001-2006	Trivial
Military backed Interim government	2007-2008	Balanced
Parliamentary Democracy	2009-2013	Balanced

Progressive stage put finger on a stage in which progressive forces are engaged in revolt in sustentation of people's causes and their national movement for a new state. As integration of both progressive forces and people in the formation of national movement against common threat, this stage can be considered as the beginning of civil military relations. In political lexicons, all aspects of state's life are being observed and evaluated with legal definitions and color. But here in this context, Bangladesh's demand for a separate nationhood could be

understood through Progressive stage analysis with an attempt to create a nation-wide collective consciousness with the support of people to establish a just society where one will not supersede others. Equal consideration of all elements in the national freedom movement and thereafter, may also have positive impacts on civil military relations. Popular image of military where military always stands with and for people's consciousness would be appreciated even after the creation of a new state.

Trivial stage denotes a stage where civil military relations are not developed and unsubstantial. They are in substantial stage and both civilian and military sides of the state try to come out of the internal issues that the state is suffering from. This stage marks with several socio, economic and political issues and complications that newly formed states face at its organic stage. If the civilian system fails to represent the actual causes of the people and if military tries to dominate the civilian government, such cases come in Trivial classification. This stage is characterized by over politicization of civilian system and politicization of military. At both these levels civilian government deliberately keep aloof from their role of transforming socio, economic and political status of people to a better level. Sometimes military seems vulnerable to political influence and carries out governing elites agendas to gain power.

Transitory stage can be marked with the strengthening of civil military relations by following constitutional obligations and can be noted that both civilian government and military carrying their responsibilities towards people. Here the civil military system observes a transition in which over politicization of civilian system and politicized military can be replaced with transparent and accountable civil military relations. This is also a stage where both these aspects of society will search for reforms and attempts to clarify all. At this stage, either civilian or military wing could act like a director to correct and stabilize the destabilized system. Balanced level shows the civilian supremacy over military and military will also in a position to engage in socio, economic and political transformation of society. This level underlines the relevance of civil military equation and cooperation. In order to reach a balanced stage in civil military relations, states have to create ample socio-politic and economic environment in the country. States policies in purview of socio, economic and political developments must be initiated and vindicated well. At the same time, social composition of military should represent actual

demography of the country, technically and structurally military must be well composed and it has to come under the civilian supremacy.

Civil Military relations in Bangladesh has been evaluated and commented by many of the major political thinkers in South Asia. Majority of them have used Huntingdon's or Finer's formula to measure the nature and level of civil military relations. Finding that there are more unexplored areas on this field to explore, this study suggests a new trajectory of four stages: Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced, as already discussed above. Therefore, coming section intends to examine above mentioned four stages in the context of Bangladesh. The justifications to this new method explain the fact that the military in Bangladesh has been assigned with socio, economic and political reformer's role. But throughout the political history of Bangladesh, it observes that whole system has been operated under two disdaining factor; militarized politics and politicized military. The coming paragraphs categorises civil military relations in Bangladesh into six phases and analyses each phases with new trajectory.

#### **6.7 Erstwhile East Pakistan (1947-1971): Civil Military Relations in Progressive Stage**

There are number of observations on the formation of civil military relations in Bangladesh and among them the most prevalent is the lineal descendent of the British Indian and Pakistan army. Even in the case of army, it inherited not only the institutional framework of its predecessors but also their ethos and orientation against the politics of civilians and their consciousness of political power. But even at the institutionalization process of civil military relations, the colonial masters had disdained its structure and mismanaged the army. To get a clear picture of this historical aspect, one needs to look some glimpses in the history. As early as 1857, the politicization of the Bengali armed personnel from this part of the sub-continent was highly resented by the British generals. They deliberately excluded the Bengalis from the British Indian Army since the Mutiny of 1857.

Major General Hearsey, one of the first British Generals took note of the original uprising in Barrack in 1857 and urged that recruitments of all Brahmins and Muslims of Hindustan cease (Rabindranath 2016). Recruitment to the British Indian Army was thus largely confined to the north western part of India from the so-called martial races of Punjab (111). That is why the number of Bengalis in the British Indian Army has always been very small. In 1930, the Indian

Statutory Commission pointed: *“Bengal with a population of 45 millions, provided 7,000 combatant recruits; the Punjab, with a population of 20 millions, provided 349, 000 such recruits. The Punjab and the United Provinces provided three-fourths of the total number of combatant recruits raised throughout India”*. (Rabindranath 2016: 25)

The scenario has completely changed just after the creation of India and Pakistan as separated state entities. Army had been constantly used to suppress the demands of east Bengalis to form a nation based on their commonly used language, Bangla. The authoritarian and military governments in Pakistan used maximum military force and crushed down the popular strength of east Bengalis. Pakistan army, too, had representations from east Bengal, but most of them were deployed in West Pakistan. By doing so, Pak civilian administration assumed that they could easily make the east Bengali faction in the army weak and less organized. Pakistan was highly successful to suppress east Bengali's demand for separate nationhood from 1947 to 1971.

But internally well-organized people in east Bengal under the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had used the momentum and formed a new army called Mukti Bahini. And most of the bureaucrats from east Bengal in Pakistan administration had provided moral support to this movement. Instead of observing the history of civil military relation in Bangladesh as colonial legacy, one could also see a new move, formation of Mukti Bahini and demand for freedom, from east Bengalis to create a new state where no one alienated.

The long struggle of Mukti against Pakistan army and Rasakars resulted in the defeat of Pakistan and transferring power from west Pakistan to East Pakistan. So, basically the struggle was not for just to get freedom and settled, but to develop a new state system without getting the hang of colonial and Pakistan misrule. Since army was the core aspect of independent struggle, the same got much preference in institutionalizing the legal machineries. There was always an attempt to balance the civil military relations in the early days of Bangladesh. But what spoiled the relation were politicians' hesitations to follow and democratic constitutional principles and their interest to politicize military for political reasons. So here in this stage, study would prefer to examine civil military relations during Bangladesh liberation war was moving on progressive stage and in order to institutionalize stable civil military relations, both respected the domain of each other.

After the birth of Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign state on 16 December 1971, the military refused to recognize the results of the general election of 1970, which led the people toward the liberation war. The general election, held in December 1970 clearly revealed the verdict of the people of Pakistan. But Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of PPP addressed two majority parties in Pakistan. The first is in the eastern wing where the Awami League had secured 167 out of 169 seats reserved for East Pakistan in the 313-member National Assembly (Halim 2010: 13). The second is in West Pakistan where the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had secured 88 out of 144 seats reserved for West Pakistan. In addition, the main reasons for the break-up of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh were the lack of Bengali participation in central decision-making processes in Pakistan. The colonial style of exploitation of the then East Pakistan by West Pakistan further aggrieved this background. By 1970 out of twenty central secretaries only three Bengalis had attained the rank of secretary. Similarly, out of thirty-five army officers of the ranks of Major General Lt. General and General, there was only one Bengali.

On 7 March 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman addressed a gathering of about a million people in the Ramna Race Course demanding the immediate abolition of Martial Law and transfer of power to the people's elected representatives. He urged the people to continue their nonviolent non-cooperation movement until these demands were realized and declared that the struggle this time was for complete "emancipation and independence" (Halim 2010: 17). But the military junta led by General Yahya Khan could not transfer power. On the contrary, the Pakistani army cracked down on an un-armed people in Dhaka at mid night on 25 March 1971 and arrested Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, proposed Prime Minister of Pakistan. Consequently, the independence of Bangladesh and liberation war was declared by the then Major Ziaur Rahman on behalf of our great national leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The people of East Pakistan plunged into the liberation war. The Bengali personnel of the army stationed in East Pakistan also did revolt and sided with the people to fight for independence under the political leadership.

So during these periods, it shows that there were number of attempts made by Awami League, Mukti Bahini and common people to establish a new system, a democratic system, which would cater their all interests. Basically, this period had seen as the base of healthy civil military relations in Bangladesh. The bond between civilian system and Mukti Bahini was strong in those

periods but fail to carry the legacy in future life of the state. While justifying the term progressive, the main aim is to research and explore the exact nature of civil military relations.

### **6.8 Trivial Stages of Civil Military Relations: 1971-1991**

In the history of civil military relations in Bangladesh, period from 1971-1991 has been considered as a turbulent stage where two aspects of the state system, civil and military, clash each other regularly. As per the new trajectory of civil military analysis, study examines and compares this stage of civil military relations as Trivial. The coming paragraphs make an attempt to synchronize the new concept, Trivial, with examples from Bangladesh. Just after Independence, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared his primary role on returning to Bangladesh following the conclusion of the civil war was to rebuild the country's political-administrative institutions. Mujib did not deliver on that promise. Having reached a moment when the only instrument of government lay in the utilization of violence, the question that emerged centered on where the violence would be directed. Mujib must have believed he could punish his enemies i.e. anyone who challenged his supremacy. Mujib's constitutional dictatorship was overthrown by a bloody military coup in which Mujib and his entire family, except two of his daughters who were abroad, were assassinated. Martial Law was declared ousting Mujib's civil government; the army emerged as a powerful political force and the body polity of Bangladesh faced a new and unexpected era of military rule. The nature of military rule is that it comes to power ousting a civil government completely in an illegal way and it never comes to give democracy.

The first military ruler Major General Ziaur Rahman began to civilianise his regime gradually. This civilianisation came to an end in 1979 when the Constitution 5th Amendment was passed legalising all military activities. Martial Law was withdrawn and the Constitution was allowed to continue as the supreme law. But the governmental system was fundamentally retained as an authoritarian as was introduced by the 4th Amendment and some undemocratic provisions introduced by the 4th Amendment were removed and some relations among the institutions of the government were liberalized. The presidency as modified by the 5th Amendment was much more powerful than the presidency under the French Constitution. The system lacked the principle of checks and balances. The system was an all-powerful executive ridden presidential system which armed the President with all devices to administer his dictatorial rule.

The executive authority was vested with the President who was directly elected by the people for a period of five years although without a limit to the number of terms in office. Once elected it was quite impossible to remove him from the office, for the impeachment procedure as introduced by the Amendment was unprecedentedly a difficult one. All extra-ordinary constitutional devices like emergency, ordinance-making powers, preventive detentions etc. were retained which armed the President to act almost in a dictatorial way. The President was also the chief legislative initiator through his power to address and to dissolve the parliament. Also the power of the parliament was kept restricted like that of a rubber stamp body. Zia's system was, therefore, neither a fully democratic government nor was it an ever hated dictatorial one as introduced by Mujib.

It was a multi-party presidential system blended of democratic and autocratic features. Though most observers believe in Zia's sincerity concerning the country's development programmes and his faith in Bangladesh's destiny, his leadership was flawed due to his inability to build political institutions. While in power, he depended more on civilian-military patronised bureaucratic institutions than on political ones. His encouragement of factionalism in the opposition parties and his use of the legislature as a rubber stamp created serious complications for the sound growth of constitutionalism.

The trend of civilianisation by Zia was smashed by the imposition of second time martial law by Ershad in 1982. Parliament was dissolved, the Constitution was suspended and all political activities were banned. Following the path of Zia, Ershad began to civilianise his regime and martial law was withdrawn after 4 and half years when the 7th Constitution Amendment was passed legalising all military activities. Though Ershad civilianised and legalised his regime he, unlike Zia could not gain support from the people, for he lacked Zia's charisma and liberation war credentials and remained solely depended upon the military for his survival. Throughout his autocratic rule, 8 years and 9 months- the longest period in the constitutional history of Bangladesh, the issue which haunted Ershad was the question of his legitimacy to govern the country. There were continuous movements against Ershad regime and on his way to suppress this movement he spoiled almost all institutions of democracy. During his regime the election process in Bangladesh became a total farce and mockery. Through unprecedented electoral malpractice Ershad destroyed the electoral process in the country.



Ershad amended the Constitution as many as four times and every time he did it for his own political end. He used all autocratic measures like preventive detention, emergency, ordinance making as per his own will. There are many instances that not only democracy but good autocracy or military dictatorship which at least believes in real nation-building can usher in economic development in a country. South Korea, Indonesia, Myanmar etc. bear the testimony of such example. Unfortunately, Bangladesh did not deserve even any of such type of autocracy.

During the long term of military rule the institution which has been mostly damaged but which is considered as the pivotal force for developing constitutionalism is the party system in the country. Since the political activities were banned repeatedly, the strength and cohesion within the most famous parties was destroyed. On the one hand, many experienced political leaders left their original parties and joined new parties created by military ruler; and on the other hand, mushroom growth political parties devoid of any ideology or programme were created by money-power just to give a democratic poster to the election of the military ruler. The Ershad regime was toppled by a popular mass-movement in December 1990 when the military withdrew its support.

It is also clear that during the periods of Ershad and Zia, Bangladesh had been witnessed several experiments even to re-introduce a multi-party system in the country. At the same, both leaders have done a lot to professionalize and develop skills of army. By doing so, both leaders thought that state will be safe from political instabilities and possibilities of military coups. Though they introduced such reforms, civil military relations remained tensed and turbulent. The whole state always fell in the doom of military coups and political instabilities. It was because of two factors; first, they engaged in over politicization of army and appointed many army personnel in political posts. Second, there was no deliberate democracy, development agenda and people's concerns were ignored and never considered. So, Bangladesh had witnessed several military coups during these periods and it had adverse impacts on civil military relations. It reflects a Trivial nature in civil military relations.

## **6.9 Transitory Stages of Civil Military Relations: 1991-2001**

Things are showing definite improvement with the revival of democracy in Bangladesh since 1991. But democracy again is limping due to severe antagonisms that persist between the two most important political power centres of the country that is Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL) when there is lack of consensus between these two political forces on certain national issues. Both the parties again tend to increase their influence in the military hierarchy, which is to affect the neutrality that should generally be maintained by any professional armed force. In such case the parties would do dilemmas to the armed forces. Both the parties at some point in time have tried to utilize or thought of utilizing the services of army to their advantage, in order to overcome political crisis (Schendel 2009: 19). Such attempts go against the objective control of the military by the civilian political leadership as outlined by Huntington.

Under a system of civilian supremacy, military is allowed to develop professionalism and thereby make them politically sterile and neutral. A highly professional officer corps would stand ready to carry out the wishes of any legitimate civilian group that wields state power (Schendel 2009). Bangladesh military officers are expected to remain staunchly loyal to the Constitution and to the institution of the President of the Republic. The cadets who pass out from the Bangladesh Military Academy to become commissioned officers take oath of allegiance to these two institutions during their graduation ceremony. By swearing allegiance to the President, all army personnel ensure that the armed forces remain a truly nonpolitical and non-partisan organization that represents national interest and none other. The national interest should be to maintain professional and politically neutral armed forces. It is only such an armed force, which would stand firm to defend the vital national interests in times of national crisis.

All political parties should, therefore, make sincere efforts to keep the armed forces apolitical and keep it united. The party in power should also strive to uphold the unity of command that is sine qua non for any disciplined and regimented service. With the ushering in of democracy in 1991, civil-military relations in Bangladesh have now taken a new turn. There are definite positive developments. Veena Kukreja has shown if the level of the institutionalisation of civilian political procedures, the level of military institutionalisation, the domestic socio-economic and international environment showing level of social mobility and economic mobility

are high, then there would be integrated boundaries displaying civilian control and if these are low then there would be fragmented boundaries displaying tenuous civilian control (Kukreja 1998). In Bangladesh these levels cannot as yet be graded high but it is definitely 'picking up' notwithstanding the irritants and vibrations at times.

Bangladesh constitution is rather generous to allot a separate chapter (Chapter IV) under Part IV (the Executive) that deals with Defence Services. President of the Republic is shown as the Supreme Commander of the Defence Services although the Prime Minister exercise de facto powers, as is the practice in any parliamentary system government. Parliament shall by law regulate the raising, maintaining discipline, grant of commission, appointment of Chiefs of Staff etc. of the defence services. No war could be declared nor the Republic would participate in any war without the assent of the parliament.

During Ershad regime, it would be relevant to mention here, that Parliament's assent was taken when Bangladesh defence forces participated in the US led coalition forces formed to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi aggression in 1990-91. Constitution's mandatory clause was followed while participating in the war. However, Parliament should be more active in revising, renovating different military laws, rules and regulations inherited by Bangladesh from Pakistan. Constitution's spirit should be felt by the Parliament and updated statutes should be framed to cope up with the democratic values and catering to present day socio-economic and political realities of the country, of the region and the world at large. There is a parliamentary standing committee on defence, which sits occasionally to discuss defence related matters. This committee definitely discusses some of the relevant and burning issues that affect the defence services but they need to go deeper into the each and every aspects of defence services as visualized in the constitution (Khan 1999).

The parliamentary standing committees seem to have no effective say over the functions of different ministries. These committees appear helpless as the ministers concerned very often ignore them. The parliamentarians should make the defence services accountable and transparent as far as policies, procurement, budgeting, expansion etc. are concerned.

Again the Cabinet should also habitually go deeper into the defence-related matters. It has the solemn responsibility of issuing directives on national security. It may also occasionally review broad policy guidelines on procurement, expansion, appointment and promotions, updating of the statutes and apportionment of responsibilities to different national security organizations. Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) which would be responsible inter alia to evaluate the actual threat and lay down minimum force requirement, define the tasks of the armed forces, determine the future goals and review the preparedness of each service in the execution of approved plans. The committee would be headed by the Prime Minister and include as permanent members the Minister for Defence, Foreign Affairs, Information and Broadcasting, Home, Communications, Commerce and Industry and Finance. This cabinet subcommittee had been quite effective in providing policy directives and coordinating governmental efforts during national crisis especially during 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence under Indira Gandhi's regime. The sub-committee would be an executive body issuing orders on behalf of the Government (Schendel 2009).

Another point may be clarified here is that a parliamentary standing committee can basically provide advice or require it review or to answer any question relating to any ministry or department and submit its report to parliament or forward its recommendations to the ministry or department concerned. However, it may be noted that the cabinet sub-committee and the parliamentary standing committee would not run counter to each other rather they should complement each other. Efforts should be made to strengthen both the committees in order to institutionalise democracy and for better transparency and management of the armed forces affairs.

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh wields all the executive powers of the Republic. It, therefore, boils down he or she has complete command and control over the Armed Forces of Bangladesh as also he/she is the Defence Minister concurrently. Since the birth of Bangladesh, the Chief Executive of the country has been always concurrently holding the portfolio of the Ministry of Defence except that a State Minister of Defence was appointed during the era of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for a short period. This arrangement has both good and bad sides. Good side is that the Armed Forces get the attention and patronage of the Chief Executive directly, which definitely go a long way in the development and modernization of the Armed Forces. The

other side could be that the busy schedule of the Chief Executive may not allow him/her to spare enough time to go into the details of the Defence Services.

A cabinet colleague dealing with the Ministry of Defence only would not make much difference to the influence the Chief Executive would have on the defence forces since Armed Forces Division (AFD), that deals with the operational and command functions, is part of the Prime Minister's office. As a matter of fact, during Ershad's regime Ministry of Defence (MOD) was entrusted primarily with accounts, lands and cantonments, macro budget processing, construction, legal matters and the civilian aspects of the defence activities. The command functions are the responsibilities of the re-organised Armed forces Division. MOD controls the budget of the defence forces, which is one of most effective control mechanisms on the functioning of the military. The BNP Government (1991-1996) had, inducted AFD in the Prime Minister's office. Subsequent governments continue with the system. As a matter of fact, the matters strictly military in nature are handled by AFD, which is fully staffed by the military officers.

Understanding and evaluating the operational, training and intelligence problems are better done by the military officers staffing the AFD. This has reduced the snags that bedevil the communication between the civil and military bureaucrats. MOD has only one of its Joint Secretaries from army and also an Engineer adviser to advise the Ministry on construction and maintenance. Civil bureaucrats in the MOD are definitely all enlightened and competent but they may not have the requisite expertise on military operation, intelligence and training etc. It is, therefore, logical that the military bureaucrats staffing the AFD handle such subjects.

As already shown this control by civil bureaucracy, at times, creates an unpalatable environment. Maintenance of sound civil-military relations is founded equally on the internalization of allegiance to democratic process by both the civil military elites. It is also necessary to create some defence-related expertise among the civilian working in the Ministry of Defence. In Bangladesh setting the AFD, as it appears today, is functioning smoothly and decisions from the Chief Executive are obtained timely which definitely has an impact on the better management of the Armed Forces. However, AFD should do more to coordinate and conduct inter Services training and evolve inter services strategies, operational concepts and doctrines. In doing so, AFD can be a good link between the Parliament, the Cabinet and the Chief Executive on the one

hand and the Services Headquarters on the other. The idea of having a Chief of Defence Staff or a Chief of Staffs committee can be given a due consideration. In modern management, there are concepts called Top Down and Bottom Up techniques. AFD by following these techniques can contribute in synthesizing security concepts, defence policy, operational concepts and doctrines and feed the Cabinet for necessary vetting. AFD should harmonize the inputs both from the civilian and military sectors.

National security today is the domain of both the civil and military men. It is achieved through a well- articulated policy determined at the highest level of the government i.e. cabinet, parliament, AFD, MOD, and Ministries of Foreign and Home Affairs etc. The policy should be a blend of political vision, strategic aspirations, regional and international environment, economic and military capabilities. While political masters determine the policy, the military leaders need to provide the military viewpoints, given that in a workable democracy if not vibrant, Bangladesh should develop a healthy civil - military relations and viable politico- military structure for ensuring national security. Security today is a very broad term encompassing political, economic, social, military and environmental aspects. Rumana Samiruddin Khan in her book, *Non-Military Security of Bangladesh - External Determinants*, highlights that the economic, trade, aid, debt, poverty, environment related security vulnerabilities are more pronounced; than the traditional or military threats of Bangladesh (Khan 1999).

Prof Abul Kalam of Dhaka University, however, concludes that the non-military security threats someday may turn into traditional threats between the two neighbors may be over environmental issues. He shows, quoting Kelly, degradation of the environment may constitute the gravest danger to national security in contemporary times (Kalam 2010). Basic land hunger, shortage of water and power, movement of refugees across international borders, and so on are disputes which do not preclude the use of force. Both aspects of security, therefore, have to be taken into consideration and appropriate national strategies are to be evolved. In doing so civil-military interaction is a must.

Walter Lippman and Talukder Maniruzzaman have talked about the concept of security as one of the protection of core values i.e. political independence and territorial integrity. This is a realist's conception or this is *realpolitik* which is, however contradicted and sidelined by another select group of security experts. Bangladesh has no natural barriers separating it from outside powers

and is therefore, easily vulnerable to any blistering foreign attack (Lippman 1999 and Maniruzzaman 1999). The tyranny of geography is the most important factor in the defence vulnerability of Bangladesh. Talukder Maniruzzaman opines that the small states bordering the super/great powers tend to get violated by their neighbour as far as their independence and territory are concerned. He draws examples from China, India, Indonesia and Vietnam to indicate that the Third world big states and non-third world super/great powers are of the same breed (Maniruzzaman 1999).

This statement is somewhat simplistic and straightforward would be contradicted by other academics and the countries concerned; it nonetheless sets a scene of Bangladesh's defence vulnerability. But what should be the strategies to cope up with this vulnerability. Talukder Maniruzzaman speaks candidly in his book *Military Withdrawal from Politics- A Comparative Study* about disbanding the standing army and raising a citizen army in its place. Such a system would provide a superior defence strategy and end the circle of military intervention, withdrawal and re-intervention.

Talukder Maniruzzaman, an internationally reputed security expert has suggested that the whole Bangladeshi people be turned into an army after having disbanded the regular army (Maniruzzaman 1999). This suggestion is given basically to deter the recurrence of military intervention in Bangladesh politics. To some, it would appear to be an aberrant view. Some has suggested for the abolition of the standing armed forces and prescribed to follow the examples of Switzerland, Costa Rica, Mauritius, and Panama. If this debate is not topical and relevant then another renowned intellectual Abdur Rob Khan, Research Director, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) would not have to defend the concept of a standing army and added that under both optimistic and pessimistic security scenarios in the twenty first century, the need for a good and professional standing army cannot be over-emphasised.

A plea to those who argue that we don't need a standing armed forces, please do not use argument that goes against the very interests of our existence as a sovereign nation. A former Chief of Bangladesh's apex defence intelligence agency in a recent interview has disclosed that one of its neighbors never wanted independent Bangladesh to have any armed forces and some of

the of the intellectuals, columnists and politicians, these days, often express that Bangladesh doesn't need a standing armed force. Another scholar of BIIS would like us to consider if Bangladesh could have the option to dismantle the military forces if it (Bangladesh) could be declared a neutralized country like Switzerland through the positive consent of the international community. He, however, concludes that may not be feasible since Bangladesh is not geopolitically as important as Switzerland, with that he has suggested for a small but a highly skilled army.

However, all the political parties who have representation in the parliament stand for a strong standing armed force for Bangladesh. So all these parties would, in all probability, not agree to disband the standing armed forces, for the sake of curtailing military intervention in politics or to lessen the burden on our economy or apparently for not having any possibility of Bangladesh being physically annexed by any potential aggressor.

Now it's highly relevant to we examine a state where Bangladesh would have no standing army - it would only be a citizen army. While the idea of all able-bodied people of the country are conscripted and trained to fight the aggressor in time of need is a worthy proposition, but given the political, social, economic, regional and international milieu it would be extremely difficult to get all the able-bodied citizens of the country trained may be only defensive weapons during peace time and keep them motivated, dedicated and disciplined. It would be indeed a complicated and expensive affair to raise a citizen army or a national militia as proposed by Talkukder Moniruzzaman and to organize their training and keep necessary armaments stored and functional.

Bangladesh was one of the highest troops contributing countries in the world in the UN Peace support missions overseas. Even President Clinton eulogized the Bangladeshi peacekeepers in Bosnia during his recent visit to Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been ensuring peace and helping in the establishment of democracy in Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Angola, Mozambique, Haiti, East Timor, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Namibia, Sierra Leone etc. A brigade sized Bangladesh contingent took part in the multinational coalition to fight the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. This has also immensely benefited Bangladesh financially. Around 40,000 officers and men of Bangladesh Armed Forces have so far taken part in overseas employment that mainly includes UN missions and reconstruction of Kuwait. In the last about 10-12 years,



unlike any other public Sector Enterprises, Bangladesh Armed Forces so far have contributed around US \$ 600 million to the economy of Bangladesh.

In 1991 in one of century's most devastated tidal surges/cyclones that wrought unimaginable damage to human lives and property, in the southern and eastern districts of Bangladesh, it was first the members of the Bangladesh Armed Forces who reached the area with the saving food, medicine etc to the afflicted-still surviving- people in the remote off shore islands. The situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) was complicated and Bangladesh Government has been fighting the insurgents since 1975. When the civil police and administration failed to maintain the law and order Bangladesh army was called in. Bangladesh Army has restored the territorial integrity of one-tenth of Bangladesh through unimaginable sacrifice in terms of casualties both dead and wounded caused. Aim of any counter insurgency operation is to restore the civil administration in the affected areas, which has otherwise failed. Bangladesh Army has definitely done that. Malaysia is a success story in counterinsurgency in this part of the world followed by Bangladesh.

This is one classic example where the civil-military agencies of the Government have been working hand in gloves in restoring the political legitimacy of the Government and bringing back peace in the region. The entire command structure of the Army from Army Headquarters, Division Headquarters, Brigade Headquarters and Unit Headquarters are involved in coordinating the entire efforts be it military, paramilitary, development, civic action, motivation etc, in close co-ordination with the civil administration.

How could these gigantic efforts be carried out without a standing army with necessary command structure, communication, infrastructures and logistics? These forces also formed the nucleus of the regular Bangladesh armed forces subsequently. As a matter of fact, any war of liberation or war of resistance or insurgency has to end with formation of regular forces. While the irregular forces create the right environment for the victory the regular forces defeat the occupation forces in detail and thereby ensure final victory. Bangladesh is now a reality which has already *chequered* thirty years of its existence. Now it is time that Bangladesh should evolve a clear-cut, concrete security, defence and operational concepts and strategies to fight any threat that may emanate both from within and without.

Bangladesh's options are limited to defensive and infantry intensive only. It would seek to delay the aggressor the international boundary as long as possible. It has reasonably equipped and manned conventional military force, which, over the years, gained enough strength to blunt enemy's offensive at the outset. It can cause some kind of attrition in the process. It has certain lacunas which merit immediate redress to make it a stronger defensive war machine. Those may not be discussed here for obvious reasons. This is where comes the civilian political leadership to grasp the defence requirements and fill up those as much as the economy and vision permit. Conventional battles must be fought by our conventional armed forces since they are raised and sustained at the tax payers money for the purpose. However given the background of Bangladesh's experience of fighting a people's war in 1971 and to offset the inherent limitations imposed on her conventional war fighting capability, idea of blending conventional and unconventional techniques of war merit a serious consideration.

It is proposed that the standing army should be maintained and developed while concurrently organizational network should be put in place to invigorate the thousand sources of resistance. This is from where comes on main table to discuss the efficacy of civil-military relations in the battlefield. The conventional armed forces have to take the lead and take the maximum brunt. The entire government machinery-its bureaucracy, its civilian resources like food, transports, medical facilities, petroleum, engineer equipment etc, all paramilitary and auxiliary forces, foreign service, mass media along with the entire cross section of people will have to make a team with the conventional standing military forces. The entire nation will have to be on war footing then. The techniques of both the conventional and unconventional war will be amalgamated and activated concurrently. The larger part of standing army will take up defensive positions to fight back the aggressor along certain lines.

The unconventional force composed of a portion of conventional force and the BDR units, BNCC battalions, Ansars, Village Defence Parties, Security guards, and local Chowkidars, ex freedom fighters and other volunteers will basically disrupt enemy's lines of communication in tune with the conventional fight. These unconventional force will turn out to be a bigger force, may be making brigade or division size force. However the overall command of both the forces will remain with the local conventional Army Area Commander. The success of unconventional war as demonstrated during the War of Independence in 1971, can largely be

sustained on our civilian leaders' motivation to hold the population in their respective villages, and districts. This blend of conventional and unconventional methods of warfare would greatly depend on good civil-military relations. In order to develop good civil-military relations that would produce good dividends during war, peacetime efforts should be activated in national development area where civil-military agencies could work hand in gloves. This is needed on two counts, firstly it would help foster better civil-military relations and secondly, the military, whose maintenance is a burden on the exchequer, could contribute in the economic development of the nation.

Traditional concept of security has led to under-utilization of armed forces in socio-economic development of a nation like Bangladesh. Defence forces can be integrated with the mainstream development activities of a nation and make the defence more income generating and thus self-financing. However, the personnel employed on such role must undergo the usual military training to keep them fighting fit and operationally ready. The military elements can contribute to the civilian sector in afforestation and environment protection, mass literacy drive, medicare, sanitation and hygiene, agro development, communication development, construction of buildings and shelters, assisting port authorities, telecommunications, human resources development, farming, banking, dual purpose industrialisation etc.

Armed Forces are now intimately involved nationwide in the construction of shelters to 30,000 landless and homeless families in close cooperation and coordination with the civil authorities at national, district and sub-district levels. The project called *Ashrayon* - a case in point - is a shelter and self-employment programme for the poorest people of Bangladesh. It also envisages socio-economic development of the beneficiaries. The construction of 3,000 houses over a period of five years' is being done by the members of the armed forces and other facilities like community centre, pond excavations, awareness creation, human resources development and skill development training are being undertaken by different civil departments of the Government. To implement the project and to provide guidance and supervision, a national committee with the State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief as convenor and other concern state Ministers and Secretaries, PSO, AFD and Director, Operations, AFD (member Secretary) has been formed.

Again for execution of the project a task force with the Deputy Commissioner as Chairman, other district level civil officials and representative of the armed forces has been formed at the district level. The progress of this project, so far is quite encouraging as it has greatly enhanced the expectation level of the landless, shelter less people of Bangladesh who would have otherwise streamed into the already overcrowded cities of the country. This has been possible mainly due to cooperative and constructive effort of the civil-military agencies of the Government - the highest agencies being the AFD and the ABASH (Ashrayon Implementation Organization) both belonging to the Prime Minister's office. Other such efforts showing excellent civil-military relations were the efficient way the century's worst ever *flood* of 1998 and post worst ever cyclone and tidal surge rehabilitation programme of 1991 were conducted. BBC's Dhaka correspondent had made a forecast that 20 million people would die in Bangladesh as a backlash to flood catastrophe of 1998.

However with the efficient handling of the post flood rehabilitation by the Government where the politicians, civil bureaucracy and the armed forces were intimately involved – BBC's forecast proved to be totally baseless and hollow. The Armed Forces of Bangladesh with the involvement of the United States Armed Forces and the civil bureaucracy, under the newly elected Government (1991), worked closely knit together - to tackle the rehabilitation programme of another worst ever cyclone and tidal surge of 1991 in an exemplary manner that was highly acclaimed by the international community in general and media in particular. Good civil-military relations have done miracles for the suffering teeming millions of Bangladesh whenever it dipped into crisis.

The period 1991-2001 can be considered as a new wave of democracy in Bangladesh and it has produced positive impacts on civil military relations. The term Transitory would be justified here that cooperation and equation of civil military have gained much prominence during these periods and military was transforming itself into a new role of engaging in socio economic and political transformations of Bengladeshis. Because of the re-introduction of democracy, civilian system had to follow the procedural obligations to take decisions on any issues concerning public matters. But it doesn't mean that Bangladesh has not seen any military coups to destabilize the system. Compared to previous stages, these durations seen attempts for consolidating democracy and maintaining civil military relations.

## **6.10 Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh (2001-2006): The Trivial Stage**

8th parliament election was held on 1st October, 2001 and the BNP formed its 4 party alliance on 10th October, 2001 headed by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. The BNP-led four part coalition government at the very fag end of its tenure gave mass promotion to civil servants entirely on political considerations, apparently for taking them on its side during the election. According to source in the Establishment Ministry, a total number of 2,380 officials were promoted in the different tiers of bureaucracy during its tenure, resulting in the record number of officials getting OSD status due to lack of vacancies (Datta 2007). State offices have been used for BNP activities. Rush for ministerial decision for purchasing government procurements deals which had been rejected earlier by the same body. Cabinet purchase body okayed 17 projects hurriedly despite flaws in many bids (Halim 2010). Age of Justices in the Supreme Court was increased with political motive, i.e, in view of in' coming national election to be run by caretaker government which was to be headed by the Chief Justice retired last, Repeated violation of the order of the Supreme Court in Masder Hussain case etc. are BNP failures.

The government formed alliance with Jamat-i-Islami, a religion based party in the country and this party instigated to incidence of rising militancy in the country. The menace of militancy was another problem for the BNP Government in power. A series of bomb blasts across the country on August 17 was a demonstration of the fire-power and the network Islamist militants had developed over the years. The militants target was the judiciary in the country in 2005. After series of bomb blast on 17th throughout the country on 14th November a suicide attack left two senior assistant judges killed in Jhalakati.

Allegation of establishing dynastic elements into to politics; giving back-up power to Tarek Zia who in behind controlled the cabinet and secretariat and the whole political system of the country. At the same time, he raised a group who became famous for corruption throughout the country. Although Anti-Corruption Commission was established by this government, arrangements were made in the law in such a way that it remained a paper tiger. It was neither in a position to bring any action against political big-wigs who were corrupted nor could it fix its own organogram. The parliament remained ineffective throughout the regime as the opposition boycotted the parliament since its early life and it was the main duty of the Prime Minister to bring the opposition back to parliament. As the parliament was ineffective, the committees in

parliament which are considered as powerful watchdog of democracy could not play any role to make the government responsible.

Election Commission as an institution of democracy was amputated to the sweet will of the 4 party alliance government. The post of the President as an institution of democracy was also damaged to such an extent that it went down to designation “yes, Boss” or “Yesuddin” (Rabindranath 2016). The post of the speaker of the national parliament as an institution of democracy was destroyed. BNP was also failed to curb corruption as the party allowed dynastic elements to creep into the body polity of the whole system. On 21st August Khaleda Zia declared that Qawami madrasha degree would get master’s degree status which has been termed as playing politics with education by the government at the end of its term.

RAB Rapid Action Battalion was formed under the Armed Police Battalions (Amendment) Act 2003 and it launched its formal operations on June 21, 2004. The members of this elite force were picked up from amongst the competent members already serving in the army, air force, navy, police and BDR. Extra-judicial killing by cross fire by RAB personnel came out in the country as other political flaws of the ruling party. The criticism began to mount as lifeless bodies of listed criminals and terrorists and their sidekicks’ begun to pile high on a roadside ditches on a daily basis, although there is no provision for extra-judicial killing in the Constitution. Human rights bodies, media and civil society watchdogs refused to allow them the extra-judicial power of killing. From 1st January, 2004- 30th June, 2005 total people killed by cross fire by RAB was 101. This number was 186 in 2006 (Datta 2007).

The seed of political controversy was sown on May 16, 2004 when the BNP-Jamat-Alliance government had amended the constitution to extend the retirement age for judges to 67 years from 65. This was viewed by the opposition parties as a conspiracy to appoint retired chief justice as the chief of the caretaker government before the 9th parliamentary election. This Chief Justice was Justice KM Hasan who was quite well known as BNP loyalist. From then on AL kept on voicing that it would not accept retired Chief Justice KM Hasan as the Chief of the caretaker government. Instead of responding to any of the objections of AL, the BNP-led affiance government’s unilateral actions in connection with a controversial voter list, appointment of CEC and other election commissioners, deepened the animosity between the rival political parties. When the affiance government handed over power on 27th October, 2006, it was almost

settled that BNP loyalist KM Hasan would be CA, and the President Iajuddin. has already been partisan, secretariat and other government agencies have already been politicized, election commission along with electoral roll has in such way been manipulated that there was certainty of the BNP getting elected in the 9th parliamentary election to be held on 22nd January, 2006. There was a very tense political atmosphere throughout the country. Amidst such situation KM Hasan declared that he was not willing to become the Chief of Caretaker Government.

On handing over the power by the 4 Party Alliance government on 27th October, 2006, violence erupted among supporters of n-c rival political parties in the capital and also throughout the country. It was almost settled that BNP loyalist retired Chief Justice KM Hasan would be Chief Adviser, and the President Iajuddin has already been partisan, speaker has played his partisan role throughout the life of 8<sup>th</sup> parliament; secretariat and other government agencies have already been politicized, Election Commission along with electoral roll has in such way been manipulated that there was certainty of the BNP-alliance getting elected in the 9th parliamentary election to be held on 22nd January, 2006. There was a very tense political atmosphere throughout the country. Amid such situation Justice KM Hasan declared that he was not willing to become the Chief of Caretaker Government. After refusal by Justice KM Hasan without resorting to other available options in the Constitution for appointing a Chief Adviser, the President himself took over as Chief Adviser. The already tensed political situation became furious resulting in killing almost 30 people and injuring thousands and against this background, the military interfered for the third time into to Bangladesh politics and the President Iajuddin was forced to declare emergency suspending all fundamental rights on 11th January, 2007. A new political order emerged in polity of the country- a caretaker government headed by Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed backed by military.

At the dawn of independence back in 1971, everyone thought that dictatorial rule in the country was over once and for all- but we were wrong. When the last military ruler was forced to step down in 1990, premise was that Bangladesh would come under a sound civilian rule, but was wrong again. After the assumption of power of a democratically elected government a year later, assumption was that a proper political process would now begin but was wrong once again. Sadly, still today, four decades after independence, politics in Bangladesh remain's decadent, old fashioned and directionless.

Bangladesh parliament has become a victim of disturbing trend of politics of boycott. Used as a purely temporary strategy by political parties or groups or labor unions to voice their dissent against an action or policy or plan by the authority in the past, boycott has now become a feature of Bangladesh politics. After the first democratically held elections, when the BNP formed the government, opposition Awami League lawmakers staged a prolonged boycott of parliament. In other words, in the 5th parliament, the lawmakers of the main opposition Awami League started boycotting Jatiya Sangsad from the 13th session and did not turn up till the dissolution of the parliament in 1996. The seats of the AL lawmakers were vacated at the 20th session on June 19, 1995 after they remained absent from parliament for 90 consecutive working days.

In the wake of the second general elections for 7th parliament, when the Awami League formed the government, opposition BNP lawmakers did the same thing. The BNP as the opposition joined parliament at the maiden session and started boycotting the house from the 13th session. Between the 13th and the 23rd session, the last session of the seventh parliament, the BNP joined parliament only to save their because if an MP stays out of the parliament for consecutively 90 days, he loses his membership in the parliament. After the last election in 2001, when BNP returned to power with its coalition partners, opposition Awami League legislators switched to their strategy of boycotting parliament once again.

At the root of all political problems of Bangladesh lie the animosity and lack of trust, compassion and accommodation between the two arch rivals and the largest political parties of the nation- the ruling BNP and the Awami League. The two parties have been at loggerheads for years. After Ershad's exit from power, their animosity continued to fight for power. The two firebrands heading the two parties Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and the Leader of the opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina have barely maintained even talking terms between them. Although it is not very unusual compared to other countries in South Asia, the leaders of the largest political parties of Bangladesh have tendency to often go as far as to accuse each other of treason.

So, it shows that there were number of attempts to politicize military, and military d been constantly used to take revenge on political opponents. In the name of terrorist hunt, couples of operations were conducted but military was blamed for killing innocent people. It questioned the credibility of military and civilian system in the country. During these periods, country was in



the verge of military coups and streets were filled with political scuffle and skirmishes. Though the government was elected, but representatives, particularly of the ruling party, were not really represented the people. It made both political parties to indulge in direct clashes resulted in hartals, demonstrations and protests. Development agendas and appeal of people were always ignored and it made the people to re think about elected responsibilities towards them. Realizing all these political crisis and dominated military, this phase of civil military relations can be compared with trivial stage of the proposed trajectory.

### **6.11 Civil Military Relations during Military Backed Caretaker Government Period (2007-2008): The Balanced Stage**

On 11th January, 2007 a new order emerged in the politics of Bangladesh and this is the CTG led by Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed and backed by military. Law adviser of this CTG Barrister Moinul Hossain once declared that this government was a military backed CTG and there has to be an exit route for this government. However, the following day Military Chief Moin U. Ahmed stated that the government was not a military backed CTG, it was a constitutional CTG and the military was giving necessary assistance to the civil administration under the normal constitutional arrangements. Civil Military during these two years had been marked as balanced and cordial. There were number of political and legal initiatives introduced by caretaker government with the support of military. The previous government had driven Bangladesh almost into chaos and people were expecting a complete change in administration. With regard to civil military relations, there are number of reforms and activities undertaken by caretaker government. Reforms and activities of this Government so far have been detailed in brief below:

### **6.12 Constitutional Review Commission**

On 10th July, 2007, Army Chief Moin U. Ahmed said that the constitution should be reviewed through a Constitution Commission for preparing new laws and mechanisms to ensure accountability and effective governance. He stated an elected government may undertake the constitutional review after elections are held by the end of 2008 when a constitution commission might be formed. This is not only an important issue but it also goes to the heart of the present political malaise in the country. Many political leaders of major parties have also realised that

intra- party political reforms are not enough for genuine democracy and have also suggested some constitutional reforms with a view to running an accountable government and parliament.

It is suggested that the Commission should consider the following list of issues:

- Should the tenure of the Prime Minister be limited to two terms, since the tenure of the President has been limited to two terms under Article 50(2)?
- Should the number of ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers and advisers, or persons having status of minister/state minister/ deputy minister be limited to only 10% of the elected members of parliament?
- Should the speaker, after being elected, cease to have any affiliation to any political party, for neutrality?
- Should there be certain number of women candidates for MPs be clearly spelt out, including the do's and don'ts? Should they be limited only to law- making functions?
- Should the powers of the president and the Prime Minister operate as checks and balances on each other?
- Should all state institutions, including the Election Commission, Anti-corruption Commission, Ombudsman, Auditor General and Public Service Commission be separated, strengthened and made independent of the government?
- Should retired persons of higher judiciary be involved in any part of the administration?
- Should former Chief Justices continue to be the Chief Adviser in non- party care- taker governments?
- Should there be a National security council for coordinating security and other national issues?
- Should any political party not going 5% of popular vote in the parliament election be denied representation in the parliament, or not recognised as a registered lawful political party?

### **6.13 Emergency and Arrest of People**

Around 286,000 people including former ministers, lawmakers, political leaders and business tycoons have been arrested across the country on charges of bribery and corruption since the

state of emergency was declared on January n, 20067. Of them, police arrested 260,000, Rapid Action Battalion about 9000 and the army-led joint forces over 17000 throughout the country. Among them were about 600 listed criminals. The high profile arrests were made after Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed's caretaker government declared war on corruption and criminal godfathers (Rabindranath 2016).

#### **6.14 Minus-Two Formula**

This formula suggests that country's two main political parties AL and BNP should be reformed by retiring or removing their present chairpersons. This is because these two parties are responsible for current political conditions and they should accept the blame and step down. Opponents of this formula argue that the minus-two formula is undemocratic as the selection of leadership is a prerogative of the party council. The party councilors can choose anyone as the party leader, and keep him/her as leader as long as they wish. However, people must have choice to elect their leader but if the same leader holds on to the party chairmanship, there will be no choice left to the people. Thus the argument that the party councilors can chose anyone as their party chief and keep him or her leader as long as they want- is not consistent with the theory and principle of democracy. Therefore, the minus-two formula, although referring to two specific persons is indeed, a general principle of the democratic political system. More specifically, this formula is key to a lasting cure for our ailing political parties.

#### **6.15 Formation of National Government and the National Security Council**

It has been suggested that one way out would be the creation of a national government of all the parties. The idea has been around before the army intervened to install a civilian interim government in January 2007. But, if freed, the former prime ministers are more likely to pursue revenge than co-operation. The same goes for the 200-odd other politicians and businessmen locked up in the anti-corruption drive. It has also been suggested that a National Security Council is to be formed to formalise the army's role in politics, as in Pakistan. At present in Bangladesh generals are surely supporting the civilian caretaker government, but some Bangladeshi's favour setting g up a security council to give the military a more formal role in the government. There should be mechanism so that the military can play its role in policy making.

## **6.16 Truth Commission**

On 27th March, 2008 the caretaker government has made a draft of Voluntary Disclosure Ordinance, 2008 which contains the provision of establishing the Truth and Accountability Commission. The draft details that the Commission consist of three members and will continue for six months only. First 30 days will be fixed for those who will come forward for voluntary disclosure. A person willing to make voluntary disclosure closure will have to apply within 30 days of establishment of the Commission, while anyone referred by NCC, ACC or court will have to apply within 60 days. The ACC (Anti-Corruption Commission) or NCC (National Coordination Committee on Corruption and Serious Crimes) or even a court may refer a person to appear before the Truth Commission. Section 9 of the draft states that those who voluntarily make disclosure to the Commission and are pardoned by the Commission will not be allowed to take part in elections or be members in corporate bodies. Again, that very section 9 stipulates that such a bar may not apply to individuals who voluntarily come forth to disclose the sources of their illegally acquired wealth. This is a fundamental contradiction in the draft law and this might make the whole purpose of the law meaningless.

The idea of Truth Commission emerged in 2006 as an alternative to dealing with graft cases and graft suspects to give the offenders opportunity to admit their culpability and be penalised monetarily instantly instead of prolonged legal process and conviction by courts. However, legal experts suggested that this arrangement goes to the counter of Anti-Corruption Commission and its activities and it has many loopholes as a system.

## **6.17 Other Reforms undertaken by the CTG**

- Anti-corruption Commission, the Election Commission, and Public Service Commission have been reformed and they have earned the appreciation of the nation. In general, the caretaker government has succeeded in convincing people that an impartial, non-partisan administration is at work.
- Coming into to power the CTG started crusade on corruption by political leaders. As many as 240 people, 217 of whom have been in politics, were however, convicted and sentenced to jail in connection with 61 cases. The highest numbers of cases were brought against Tarique Rahman, the man who had allegedly been at the centre of the rampant

corruption that had permeated every sphere of the society in five years of the immediate past regime of BNP-Jamat led four-party alliance government.

- When the Caretaker Government started campaign against corruption, there was high expectation among people that those responsible for damaging the universities and educational institutions would be brought to task. Several vice-chancellors appointed on political considerations are alleged to have committed massive corruption. Excepting one or two of the former vice-chancellors who are absconding, the others seem to be enjoying immunity from prosecution and they have been allowed to return to their original posts.
- Abolition of politics by students, teachers and workers. Election Commission made a proposal to the Government for amending the existing regulations to prohibit the political parties.
- Registration of political parties.

#### **6.18 Other Problems Confronting Civil Military Relations: The Election Commission**

The weakness of the Election Commission and its lack of independence have been so inherent and endemic that Bangladesh Constitution needed the 13th Amendment in order to introduce provisions for a Caretaker Government. Besides, the provision for the Caretaker Government during the general elections, there is also need for an independent and neutral body having its credibility on its own right beyond any reproach. Because when an election is held for the local government or a by-election is conducted for parliament Election Commission must be able to conduct election with such credibility as is needed for the general election. The Commission must have its own fund and the budget and it should have its own staffs and personnel recruited by the Commission itself. Though it is not provided in the Constitution, it is a part of a convention as practised in other countries that it should submit its report to parliament on the completion of each election and a committee will deal with it.

#### **6.19 Public Service Commission and Civil Service**

Parliament has been kept out of its arena in respect of services though Constitution has ordained that the parliament should make law regulating the appointment and the condition of services of persons in the service of Republic. In absence of any Act of parliament the terms and conditions of service are governed by the Rules made by President. These Rules are so complex and at

times inconsistent and contradictory that there remains bundle of controversies about the seniority, promotion, absorption, lateral entry, preparation of gradation list and with regard to their discipline and enquiry questions regarding equal opportunity are vital for maintaining a reasonably satisfied service cadre. Often such fundamental rights are violated without any effective remedy available to them.

There has also been reduction of power of the Public Service Commission by regulation made by the President under Article 140(2) This is an area from where the parliament has almost abdicated its power though it is the parliament which is empowered to make and to regulate the service condition and to decide on the powers of the Public Service Commission. The Public Service Commission's recommendations are often not complied with by the Ministry of Establishment. These facts are contained in the report which is placed before the parliament but unfortunately the parliament does not provide as to how these reports are to be dealt with and the follow-up measures to be undertaken nor does it identify the committee which should deal with these reports. In almost all democratic countries the reports of the Public Service Commission is dealt with a committee of Parliament.

### **6.20 Problems of Bureaucracy and Public Administration**

The Bangladesh bureaucracy is well known as hot-bed of corruption. Corruption in the administration of Bangladesh is worse than anywhere in the world. Interestingly the politicians blame the bureaucrats for corruption and inefficiency in the public administration. On the other hand, bureaucrats blame politicians for corruption and inefficiency. Who are then really responsible? It is the politicians who are responsible for the problems in bureaucracy. Politicians have not applied and sometimes have applied improperly those controlling devices to keep bureaucrats within their bounds. There are some universally recognised methods of ensuring accountability of bureaucrats. But Bangladesh administrative system lacks those methods from very inception. Of course, it is the fact that the war of independence that created Bangladesh was actively participated by Bangali civil and military personnel and the result was that the new Bangladesh government inherited a politicised administration.

Also was the fact that the leaders of the new born country had little administrative experience. During the Pakistan regime the process of creating an effective provincial government was

extremely slow. Almost every senior administrative post in East Pakistan was occupied by a non-Bengali Muslim. East Pakistanis were totally excluded from decision-making and getting share of the development resources. It was also the fact that in undivided Pakistan democracy was practically eclipsed after 1958 and bureaucracy played a highly political role till 1971. And as a result the British tradition of an impartial and non-partisan civil service had been destroyed and this trend had a bearing impact over the Bengali members of the erstwhile East Pakistan Civil Service who later came top addle the new Bangladeshi administration.

Despite all these factors how can it be supported that politicisation would continue even after the start of constitutionalism in Bangladesh? Controlling devices would not at all be set to work?, Law would be made just to vitiate the constitutional independence of and mutilate important organs like CAG, Election Commission, PSC etc? Then During 15 years of military rule the bureaucracy was politicised and militarised just to satisfy the needs of military ruler. During both Zia and Ershad regime top civil and military bureaucrats held important positions and were involved in both critical policy formulation and policy implementation, they had also direct access to the President and could sometimes even override the decisions of their ministers by invoking the President's support. The rules of business as they existed in Bangladesh allowed a matter to be referred to the President in a case of difference of opinion between the minister and his departmental secretary. There were many instances when both Zia and Ershad used to preferred the opinion of the departmental secretaries over those of the ministers.

Obviously under such circumstances, the civil servants developed a superiority complex over their ministers. Indeed in Bangladesh from its very inception neither a vigilant parliament nor a responsible executive was in existence to restrain the political ambitions of the civil servants. Thus as an institution of democracy the bureaucracy has lost all its possibilities and when the country was freed from the clutches of military rule in 1990, the bureaucracy was discovered as a problem-a seriously infected institution. Now the bureaucracy is almost an unruly institution, it is in a position that bureaucrats now easily defy their minister's decisions and orders. Now the public servants dare act like trade unions. Such behaviour of public servants has been entrenched with the gradual politicisation and patronisation of the government functionaries. All governments of post-independence period both civil and military are guilty of using the civil and military servants for their political narrow ends.

It is also a factor that most of the ministers since independence amassed huge wealth by corruption, sometimes they engage themselves in corruption and other misdeeds in collaboration with top-ranking bureaucrats. These are the factors which have played the key-role in turning bureaucracy into a hot-bed of corruption, these have degraded the morale of the bureaucrats, destroyed the cohesion—the administrative chain of functioning within the institution and also destroyed bureaucrats' sense of respect towards ministers which is indispensable to the smooth functioning of state administration. Thus over the years the curse of partisanship has gradually eaten away the whole notion of impartiality and objectivity on which our administrative edifice is based.

It was observed by the Bangladesh Aid Consultative group in 1994 at Paris that Bangladesh Public administration has not been able to deliver on some of the most important targets the government has set for it. Decisive action is now required at the highest level of government to begin to break the bottleneck. The problem which beset our public administration today are (i) corruption by bureaucrats; (ii) inadequate accountability ; (iii) inefficiency ; (iv) centralisation of decision-making power and bureaucrat's master-like interference in it; (v) politicisation of bureaucracy and administration etc. For a government to be responsible to the people it essentially needs a responsible bureaucracy.

To remove the difficulties and to institutionalise this bureaucracy and to make public administration accountable following measures should be taken immediately: (i) The political will of the government must be demonstrated in a way so that the bureaucrats cannot dare defy Minister's orders. (ii) Standing committees on Ministries should be allowed to work independently with full swing and support so that the bureaucrats at every ministry come under the direct scrutiny of parliament. It will only be then that members of the civil service will begin to be aware to parliaments' scrutiny. This will also ensure the communication between political leadership and bureaucracy. (iii) The constitutional independence and autonomy for the CAG must be ensured so that it can independently work in the way to make bureaucrats accountable in respect of financial matter and to monitor their financial responsibilities. (iv) A department of Ombudsman should immediately be created which will work as an all-time watchdog against maladministration, red-tapism and inefficiency in the bureaucracy.



(v) Directly elected local governments should be established according to Articles 59 and 60 of the Constitution with proper powers and independence and the respective local administration with its officials and staff must be vested in the direct control of the local governments. This will, on the one hand, decentralise administrative power, functions and responsibilities and as a result, channel-based corruption, conspiracy and red-tapism by the bureaucracy would be reduced and on the other hand, it will relieve MPs much of the burden of local responsibilities and they will, therefore, be able to concentrate more in committee functioning whereby the central bureaucracy will come under the direct control of parliament. (vi) Unconstitutional laws dealing with the functions and formation of constitutional bodies like CAG, PSC, Local Government, Election Commission etc. must be replaced by democratic laws allowing them to work independently in furtherance of better administrative accountability.

(vii) The larger the government, the wider is its reach. It is assumed that the wider the reach of the executive, more the likelihood of public harassment and more the likelihood of bureaucratic corruption. Government has, therefore, to be shrunk. In the present context where multi-national foreign investment is involved in the exploration of oil and gas, and the generation of power, there cannot be any justification for restricting private sector from importing and distributing various products like petroleum etc. Monopolies such as BPC (Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation) which bring no public benefit should be abolished. There are many other instances where the state must be rolled back. Reduction in state intervention should be the prime principle of reform.

(viii) The functioning of the PAC must be strengthened and it should be chaired by an expert opposition MP one who had been previously a Finance Minister. Proper functioning of the PAC will ensure the financial responsibility of bureaucrats in every ministry. (ix) Reports of the PSC must be dealt with a standing committee in parliament and the compliance of the commission's report must be ensured through the scrutiny of the committee system. (x) To control delegated law making by the bureaucrats a standing committee should be set up and a statutory instrument Act should be made. (xi) Ordinance-making power should be reduced so that bureaucrats cannot get any ample power in law-making avoiding parliament. (xii) Democracy within the party must be gradually strengthened so that leadership from grassroots level can develop and leaders can

gradually gather knowledge over administrative accountability and that they should not depend on bureaucrats.

(xiii) There must be specific rules for promotion, transfer and retirement of officials and promotion must be based on merit and efficiency. This will help bring efficiency and sincerity in the functioning of the administration. A good government means a good civil service. But one cannot have a good civil service without good service conditions, morale and rewards for performance. These factors need to be incorporated into any civil service reform. At the same time there must be provisions for actions to be taken when officials do not attain the standards set for them. To improve professional efficiency government officials should be given proper training particularly intensive and need based training. (xiv) Lower judiciary should be separated from the executive. This will relieve the bureaucrats of exercising judicial power on the one hand, and on the other people will get rid of the problem of corruption in Magistrate's courts where justice for the poor people is almost captive at the corrupt hand of magistrates. Separation will bring accountability in the judicial sector.

(xv) One of the most fundamental reasons for unruly situation of the bureaucracy and administration is politicisation by governments. Politicisation kills the instinct of a person to work independently, it destroys his courage to stand for justice, it turns him into a tool to serve the party, it leads him to subordinate the interest of the state and people to those of the party and art men, it gives him opportunity to adopt organised corruption and conspiracy. So long this politicisation will continue the government will never be able to build up a loyal administration. If bureaucracy and administration is to institutionalise, politicisation must be stopped and to this end PSC and other recruiting agencies should be given full independence in the matters of recruitment of officers. (xvi) Corruption is the main problem in Bangladesh administration for implementation of any development programme. Corruption has engrained in our society. But this evil cannot be wipped out overnight. No leader, howsoever, powerful or charismatic he may be, will be able to wip corruption out overnight. Only it can be wipped out gradually through the process of institutionalisation of controlling institutions and it needs a dedicated leader for institutionalisation of institutions which controls the administration.

### **6.21 Problems of Unconstitutional Laws and the Control over Delegated Laws**

The Comptroller and Auditor-General, Election Commission, Public Service Commission, Local Government etc. are constitutionally created essential institutions of democracy. Institutionalisation of democracy depends on the full independence and proper functioning of these institutions. The Constitution has given these institutions full independence but statutory laws which deal with their composition and functions are vitiating all aspirations of the constitution. In most cases these laws have been made violating the provisions of the constitution. Interesting to note that all these unconstitutional laws were made by Mujib Government in the form of Orders' particularly when Dr. Kamal Hossain was Law Minister and all successive governments just took and is now taking the benefits from those unconstitutional laws keeping virtually democracy in peril. To give democracy a positive turn these unconstitutional laws should immediately be repealed and democratic laws in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution should be made.

Though no research statistics is available but it is assumed that the largest portion of laws in the country is covered by delegated legislation. This is the area where the executive is abusing its power almost rampantly. A statutory instrument Act should, therefore, immediately be made and a standing committee should be established to scrutinise these delegated laws before they are applied.

### **6.22 Problems of Political Parties**

Political parties are backbone of democracy. Without democracy within the party-unit it is quite impossible to expect democracy at the governmental level. However, in Bangladesh as mentioned earlier political parties are mostly fragile and fragmented. The problems of political parties are as follows: (i) There are more than 100 political parties in Bangladesh but very few of them have definite ideology or programmes to be followed by supporters and future generation. Though one or two parties have ideologies and programmes, the leaders often defy them for their selfish end. (ii) Almost all political parties are based around individuals and most of them do not have any grassroots organisation or sufficient support to claim public representation. Mostly political parties are characterised by the politics of conspiracy, self-interest, greed and power-

expectation. They are personality-oriented with followers clustering around party-leaders who in turns become dictatorial.

(iii) The nature and composition of major parties reveal a disappointing state of affairs. Each major party is headed by person who is omnipotent in the management of the party-including the formation of central and executive committees. The constitutions of the most of the parties are absolutely monolithic in nature. The party chairman can make and dissolve any committee from the highest to the lowest level. The party structure and committees are filled by nomination not by election. Party is managed in such a dictatorial way that members' free-will does not bear any credit in party-meetings, often members are not given even right to express their opinion in party-meetings and what the party leader says or does becomes the ideology of the party.

(iv) Political parties in Bangladesh are considered as safe abode for criminals, terrorists and extortionists, for these types of people are always given shelter in parties. People devoid of any leadership quality or connection with the people are given position in the party. In election time people who amassed wealth through whatever means are given preference to be candidates to these who may not be so wealthy but otherwise dedicated and committed having checkered political career. People having long sacrifices, dedication and commandment with integrity are overtaken by new rich roaders. And this is being done by the party head who have little knowledge about democratic institutions and who have not reached that position through democratic process rather than through back door.

(v) Another great impediment to the growth of democracy is the hereditary or dynastic element in the party leadership. Khaled Zia became leader because she is the wife of late President Zia who founded the BNP and Sheikh Hasina because of her father who founded Bangladesh. The leaders of these two political parties are permanently settled in their respective positions cancelling all the possibilities of emergence of any new leadership in their respective parties.

This anti-democratic dynastic feature in the party leadership has been the greatest impediment to the development of constitutionalism in Bangladesh. Both Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina have created a permanent block to the democratic growth of leadership in the party leaving no scope for the emergence of a promising and dedicated leadership to lead the party and nation; both having no sufficient institutional educational background or proper knowledge over the working

of various institutions of democracy are doing the worst to destroy democracy; they are greeting extortionists and criminals to their parties; they are expressly instigating and provoking the destructive politics of students and other organisations like CBA, trade union, civil servants etc.; they are encouraging retired as well as acting bureaucrats both civil and military to come into politics; they are blatantly using government servants for their narrow political goal.

The basic reason behind almost all the above mentioned problems in political parties is the illiterate and politically unconscious people behind the scene who are supplying the real force into the body polity of Bangladesh. They do not have any knowledge over democracy, neither have they any knowledge how to manage a party, they only see a person considering his/her past dynastic history disregarding other criteria's. Khaleda Zia, whatever be her educational or other qualification, is getting support and sympathy from the people only for the reason that she is the widow of an assassinated President, a former military charismatic leader and on the belief that being the widow of Zia she would certainly keep alive Zia's glory and aspirations. Same is the case of Sheikh Hasina. Both Mujib and Zia were charismatic able to create a large and strong support-base in the country and on the basis of this support base people are giving their blind support to these ladies whatever be their experience, education or sincerity in politics.

To get rid of this problem what we need is to make our people educated and politically conscious. And to do that here again comes the question of dedicated leadership, for only a far-sighted leader can, with proper guidelines and policy-implementation, make the people gradually educated and politically conscious. But this is not possible overnight; it is a matter of considerable time and progress. But what is urgently needed is to introduce democratic culture in various institutions of democracy in furtherance of political stability which will gradually lead to economic development. It is not true in every sense that if Khaleda Zia or Sheikh Hasina resigns from party leadership while she is in power, the party will face quick decay; it is largely a matter of consensus among party leaders and particularly the sincerity of Hasina or Khaleda and it is also a matter of political tradition; if a tradition is once made by giving people, workers and supporters of the party information and knowledge over both negative and positive aspect of dynastic element in the party through mass-media people will realise and the tradition will gradually develop into a firm institution and democracy will get environment to flourish.

To institutionalise political parties for the sake of democracy in the country the following steps should be taken by the leaders:

(i) Hereditary nature of leadership should be abolished and the party each specified term, constitution should be amended to allow change in the leadership after (ii) The party structure and committees should be election and this will encourage as well as develop leadership froth grass-roots level. (iii) The party leader should not take any decision without the process of consultation or discussion. (iv) The post of the party president and the leader of the parliamentary party should not be held by the same person. Ministers must be barred from holding any party office. This will ensure the separate entity of the party as an institution of democracy on the one hand, and on the other hand, the party will be in a position to exercise a sort of control over the government or the parliamentary party so that they do not deviate from their party mandate or manifesto. (v) Regular elections should be held both at national and local levels. This will, on the one hand, ensure a legal and political process of elimination and recognition of leaders and parties in nation-building activities and on the other hand, it will help diminish the unnecessary number of political parties which were created during the long time of political vacuum.

There were number of positive reforms initiated and continued by the caretaker government to make it sure that the will not plunge into political crisis again. The primary responsibility of interim government was to develop an ample environment for election and transfer power to the newly elected political party or parties. But CTG understood that there are some pertinent issues to solve before going to conduct elections. The over politicization and factionalism in Bangladesh politics have already spoiled and convert Bangladesh into a fragile country. Therefore, the CTG has come up with several reforms and activities with the support of military with a view to purify the system again. The appointment of Constitutional Review Commission, emergency and arrest of people, Minus-Two Formula, formation of National Government, reforms in the National Security Council, Truth and Accountability Commission, the Election Commission, Public Service Commission and Civil Service, attempts to solve problems of Bureaucracy and Public Administration, problems of unconstitutional laws and the control over delegated laws and directives to political parties etc were some of the activities. This period witnessed drastic changes which direct all segments in state and the society to keep their

adherence to democratic principles. So as the civil military relations got benefitted and maintained balanced relations here.

### **6.23 Civil Military Relations (2008-2013): The Balanced Stage**

In the year 2008, the Awami League secured a landslide victory with 229 of 300 votes in parliament and AL-led alliance achieved 262 seats. On December 12, 2008, Sheikh Hasina presented the charter of change the election manifesto of Awami League which later became the unanimously accepted charter in the ninth parliamentary election. Since the beginning, the AL opposed military rule and struggled, collectively and individually, to restore democracy. There are occasions in Bangladesh that BNP leaders have implicitly expressed support for another military intervention as the only way to unseat the AL. So it is very clear that the only reason Hasina is in office is because the army didn't intervene. It has been considered that the military-AL relations have been problematic in the past and still shape perceptions of the party and Sheikh Hasina, particularly in the context of the 25 February 2009 Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) mutiny in which hundreds of rebelling soldiers killed more than 70 officers and their family members.

But the retaliation of civilian government was appreciated as the Prime Minister took initiative to negotiate, despite high-command pressure to use force, resolved the crisis without further bloodshed but caused intense resentment within some military circles that even accused her of complicity in the plot. Several senior officers were dismissed. In 2010, five officers were convicted of trying to murder her nephew, an AL parliamentarian, for involvement in the negotiations that ended the mutiny. In January 2012, the military announced it foiled a coup attempt by mid-level officers. The AL government then adopted a carrot-and-stick approach. It purged the military of AL critics, BNP and Jamaat supporters, and officers who had close contact with Pakistani counterparts and were critical of India. It was also clear that Sheikh Hasina's government opted to over-compensate the military and that characterizes the government's relationship with the military leadership, including salary increases; creation of more top posts; support for new divisions and cantonments; and allocation of valuable residential land to senior officers.

During this period, the prime minister announced that personnel of the military's main intelligence agency, Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, would receive a special monthly allowance of 30 per cent of salary. The AL also supports the military's growing business interests, awarding its entities major infrastructure and other government contracts. The military's corporate stakes, via trusts and foundations, reportedly include the commercial Trust Bank, where the army chief serves as chairman of the board of directors; insurance businesses; power plants and gas stations; and even hotels and food and taxi services. The AL believes that a military whose corporate interests are closely intertwined with the ruling party will be less inclined to any intervention.

Sheikh Hasina's relations with the institution are also informed by the 21 August 2004 attempt on her life, for which she accused both Khaleda Zia and military elements. Given this uncertain relationship, her government is unlikely to pursue any policy that contradicts the military's interests. It has even ceded some important policy ground to the military, such as allowing it to consolidate control over the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and other hill districts where it has been accused of illegal abductions, extrajudicial killings, torture and death in custody, rape, and land grabbing. This is in sharp contradiction to earlier AL governments' support for the CHT's tribal inhabitants, embodied in the 1997 CHT Peace Accord that pledged to enhance their "political, social, cultural, educational and financial rights and to expedite (the region's) socio-economic development process". The government's increasing reliance on the RAB has also strengthened the military's role. Nevertheless, whether the prime minister's concessions would avert an intervention is debatable.

Military's growing economic clout arguably makes it more, not less, disposed to intervening if it perceives risks to its corporate interests, as could be prompted should the present standoff result in a major economic crisis or the breakdown of law and order. Nor can a mid-level coup or assassination attempt be ruled out, given history and the weak chain of command. There are deep divisions within the military.

Mid-tier officers are reportedly less supportive of the government than the high command. The rank-and-file, generally more religiously conservative than the officers, are said to be more opposed to the AL's secular ideology, as well as its close ties with India. Generally more closely aligned to the BNP, some speculate they might even move in response to AL efforts to quash the



party. Moreover, the military's growing business interests are proving divisive, since the benefits are seen to be shared only among the top ranks. The BDR mutiny was provoked by longstanding grievances over pay and facilities and resentment among the BDR's rank-and-file over the corruption of army officers. It does mean that the gap between the haves and the have-nots is widening which could provoke a backlash from the lower ranks in the armed services or other security agencies.

In order to strengthen its clutch against terrorism, the Awami League government has introduced some key legislative measures that have empowered Bangladesh to take swift action on extremist activities. One of the very first actions of the Sheikh Hasina's government since taking over in 2009 was to endorse the Anti-Terrorism Ordinance, 2008 that was issued by the erstwhile caretaker government. Thus the Jatiyo Sangsad had passed the Anti-Terrorism Act in February 2009. Under this law if any Bangladeshi citizen commits an act of terror against any foreign soil be it from within Bangladesh or abroad, he would be punished as if the crime was committed in Bangladesh. Also the law allows authorities to prosecute individuals be it Bangladeshi or non-Bangladeshi who plot terrorist activities against Bangladesh from overseas.

This extra-territorial jurisdiction of the Anti-Terrorism Act is indeed reflective of the transnational nature of terrorism that has plagued today's world. This law also allows provides provisions for the courts to send militants involved in terrorist activities to the gallows. Subsequent amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2009 were made to bring this landmark law in line with the United Nations plan on counter terrorism strategy and other resolutions. One such amendment was made in 2013 which allowed courts to accept material from social media as evidence hence, making the judicial process relevant to the 21st century.

A vital factor in eliminating terrorism at its roots involve cutting off sources of funding for terrorism activities. On 20 February 2012, Bangladesh also passed the Money Laundering Prevention Act (MLPA). Under a provision of the MLPA the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of the Bangladesh Bank (Bangladesh's Central Bank) was established as the central agency tasked with tackling money laundering in Bangladesh. The FIU works closely with commercial banks in Bangladesh in order to equip them with the capabilities required for handling cases of money laundering and curbing financing of terrorism. According to the Swiss Basel Anti-Money

Laundering Index, Bangladesh was ranked the second lowest country in South Asia after India that is at risk to terrorist financing.

In addition to formulating the necessary legislation to combat terrorism, the Awami League Government has never been hesitant in banning any extremist groups, individuals, preachers spreading hatred, intolerance, radicalisation and values against the founding ethos of Bangladesh. This is undoubtedly a manifestation of Sheikh Hasina's zero tolerance policy towards terrorism and extremism. Such firm moves by the government shows that Bangladesh is willing to go to any lengths to purge extremist influences on its secular Bengali Muslim nation state.

On 12 May 2009, the then new government formed the high-powered 17-member National Committee on Militancy Resistance and Prevention. This committee chaired by the Home Ministry comprises of member from other ministries and national agencies has been tasked with tackling extremism and defeating radicalisation in Bangladesh. In August 2009, the National Committee for Intelligence Coordination was also formed with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as Chairperson. In the field of crime prevention there are two important deterrent factors. Firstly the risk of getting detected and secondly fear of the punishment. Bangladesh's anti-terrorism measures have strategically made use of both this factors to curb terrorist activities. The ability of Bangladesh's counter-terrorism forces to wipe out a banned terrorist group can be seen in the swift action taken against the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). This is due to the hard work of the Bangladeshi security forces in the enforcement of the stringent anti-terrorism laws. Hence, Bangladesh has become not an easy platform for terrorist groups to operate in Bangladesh.

After analyzing the political developments during Sheikh Hasina's regime, it reveals that civil military relations seemed to be balanced and this period had been noted with civil military equation and cooperation. Here in this stage, one could also observe three major occasions with regard to political developments in the country. The Awami League government was eager to take strict actions against anti-social elements in the country. Government was also introduced several flagship programmes for the welfare of citizens in the country. Army had been provided with various privileges and maintains an ideal obedience to civilian system. Such an engaged nature of the state had positive impacts on civil military relations. Therefore, one could compare this phase of civil military relations as balanced one.

## **6.24 Army's Role in Socio, Economic and Political Transformations and Civil Military Relations**

The functions of armies in the Marxist Leninist Analysis are presented as always strictly corresponding to the functions of the state, of which they are a component part and instrument. As per the views of Marxists that state and armed forces are rooted in the class division and the establishment of class rule, their functions can hardly be reduced to the maintenance and preservation of class domination. States have always been responsible for organizing and maintaining the life and functions of society. This responsibility implies functions exceeding the sole preservation of class rule. It can be traced to the very genesis of states and their armies, involving their dual role; both class and national. In the internal field, the state organized social life within a territory, it secured the functioning and development of economy, the functioning of the norms of the everyday life of the inhabitants and the gradual development of education and medical services. In Marxist Leninist theory, these activities have been named the organizational- economic and the cultural and educational functions. In other words, the state created external forms in which an economic, cultural and linguistic integration of the population developed. This was a national function.

Externally, the state did not represent a class separately from the whole society, but a society governed by a class. It defended the entirety of the territory and the independence of society against other societies. Both functions contributed to the formations of national cohesiveness and consciousness and finally, national ideology. Thus both functions in the interests of governing class and in the framework of its class policy were national functions. As an instrument of governing class, the state simultaneously served the nation. When the interests of the class were in discordance with those of the nation, the former waged an anti-national policy. To sum up, the set of functions armed forces usually presented in a dogmatic and rigid form. But the actual functions of army in a society or a state system are to transform the socio, economic and political life of people into a better level. In a state like Bangladesh, army, not technically, has been assigned with plethora of socio, economic and political functions. Such expansion of armies functions have come from peoples trust on army to deliver. Irrespective of national and class functions of army, Bangladesh experience shows that the army has been carrying pro people agendas at the national level though it has subjected extreme political interventions at several

points of time. The coming paragraph examines the role of army in the socio, political and economic transformations of Bangladeshi society.

**Table 12**

**Civil Military Relations in Bangladesh through the Lens of a New Trajectory and MLA**

Forms of Government	Periods	Bond between Civil Military	Marxist Leninist Analysis of Army and Civil Military Relations
Authoritarian (Pakistan Era)	1947-1971	Progressive	Army's Role in Liberation Movement and Bourgeoisie's Manipulation of Army
Parliament Democracy	1971-1975	Trivial	Army with Bourgeoisie/Ruling Regime and no Socio-Economic and Political Role
Military Autocracy	1975-1981	Trivial	Army with Bourgeoisie/Ruling Regime and no Socio-Economic and Political Role
Military Autocracy	1982-1990	Trivial	Army with Bourgeoisie/Ruling Regime and no Socio-Economic and Political Role
Parliamentary Democracy	1991-1996	Transitory	Role of Army in Socio-Economic and Political Transformation
Parliamentary Democracy	1996-2001	Transitory	Role of Army in Socio-Economic and Political Transformation
Parliamentary Democracy	2001-2006	Trivial	Army with Bourgeoisie/Ruling Regime and no Socio-Economic and Political Role
Military backed Interim government	2007-2008	Balanced	Army with Proletariats and Role of Army in Socio-Economic and Political Transformation
Parliamentary Democracy	2009-2013	Balanced	Role of Army in Socio-Economic and Political Transformation

The relevant challenge which pose to this academic endeavor in explaining the socio, economic and political role of Bangladesh army would be the over politicization and factionalist impacts on army by political parties and military leaders. Before explaining such inadequacies, one should understand army as a separate entity of the state loads with societal motives and army as an entity which controlled by corrupted civilians and politicized military personnel. A critical examination of the political history of Bangladesh reveals the fact that whenever army comes under the corrupted grips of politicized military heads and unaccountable and less transparent political leaders, army has not able to take up its social responsibilities into vindication level. The table given above presents a picture of army's socio, political and economic involvement as part of state system except at pre-Independent stage. During the pre-independent stage, Mukti Bahini, a progressive force, had been involved in mobilizing the common mass in East Pakistan to form a new statehood under the political umbrella of Awami League. This stage was characterized by the manipulation of army by Pakistan civilian administration. This resulted in the creation of a progressive force including most of the East Bengalis with a mission to form Bangladesh where social, economic and political rights are guaranteed to all. But from 1971 to 1991, army was mismanaged and handled by authoritarian political leaders and politicized military heads.

Though there were several steps initiated by each regime to professionalize military, nothing substantial was there to promote army's role in social transformation. But after the re-introduction of democracy in Bangladesh, clear cut civil military procedures were followed and administrations had used army to protect law and order of the country and discussions started to utilize army for socio, economic and political progression of Bangladeshi society. Such momentum was carried in the 2002-2006 period, but army was blamed for severely human rights violations. This period was also witnessed the use of army force to take revenge on political opponents. Thereafter, from 2007-2013, Bangladesh has been featured with comparatively well oriented and well directed army. The resources within army have improved and utilized for the progress of nation. Throughout all these periods, it is also noted that whenever army could able to carry socio, economic and political functions, such commences are the results of a better civilian system.

## **6.25 Military in Business Endeavors and Civil Military Relations**

Since the establishment of Bangladesh Army Welfare Trust in the year 1998, the army had started new culture of engaging in commercial enterprises and other social business. Paradigm shift in army's character with the complete support and financial assistance of various ruling regimes now have reached a different level. The trust directs the military to start business adventures aiming to enhance the profits and welfare of the military personnel. It was estimated that the commercial enterprises and wings of Bangladesh Army to be over 30 billion taka. But the main objective behind the establishment of trust was to look after the interests and welfare of retired military personnel's. In the year 1999, it funded the Trust bank limited. Later, it moved to some substantial energy areas where military could able to generate huge profits and today it has become a wing of the state which produces and earns for the government. A preliminary observation on today's military in Bangladesh brings out a fact that military is financially self-sufficient and self-reliant as it generates a huge chunk of income out of its business. Such direct involvement of military in commercial enterprises and social business again underlines the relevance of military's role in the socio, economic and political transformation of Bangladeshi society.

Once it has been realized that the commercial efforts and social business producing enough return, the focus was multiplied by proposing new business ventures. It is assumed that the total property value of the ventures and projects that the Bangladesh Army is doing counted to be at least Tk 3,000 crore. Whatever be the basic items consumed by the common, middle and upper income class are produced by the Bangladesh Army. These days, they have expanded their business horizon and connected with products like shoe, cement, fast food, hotel, electronic materials, bank, CNG and other basic products. It is also reported that military has already proposed to the government several other small scale ventures to start. The role of Bangladesh Army Welfare Trust act as a powerful instrument in looking after welfare of retire army personnel and their family and to generate revenue for the same purpose, it runs runs several business units or projects.

**Table 13**

**Military Budget and Spending in Bangladesh (2001-2012)**

No.	Years	Dollars	Percentage
1	2001	\$924,000,000	1.2%
2	2002	\$896,000,000	1.1%
3	2003	\$899,000,000	1.1%
4	2004	\$916,000,000	1.1%
5	2005	\$928,000,000	1.0%
6	2006	\$999,000,000	1.0%
7	2007	\$1,052,000,000	1.0%
8	2007	\$1,039,000,000	1.0%
9	2008	\$1,212,000,000	1.1%
10	2010	\$1,469,000,000	1.2%
11	2011	\$1,548,000,000	1.3%
12	2012	\$1,514,000,000	1.1%

Source: <http://militarybudget.org/bangladesh/>

It implies fact that Bangladesh army, today, have a vibrant political power in support of military's such ventures. At the same time, army tries to become a force involved not only in ensuring sovereignty but also contributing to the socio-economic development of the country. After 1971, the Sena Kalyan Sangstha (SKS), early welfare trust wing for army in Bangladesh, began its ventures only with Tk 2.5 crore. Interestingly, within four years, it has turned into Tk 100 crore. The 40 plus years of army's involvement in business produced a lot and gained good momentum for army in Bangladesh. But major shift happened only after 1999 when Trust was established. Today, both Bangladesh Army and Air Force of the armed forces division together owns shares in real estate and four international service-oriented businesses. Seeing this interest in businesses by the army, the government had decided to hand over several government loss-incurred-institutions to them. The organisations under SKS are Chocolate and Candy Factory, SKS Bhaban, SK Textile, Diamond Food Industries, SKS commercial Space, Sena Garments, Sainik Lamps Distribution Centre, SKS Trading House, New Hotel Tiger Garden, Amin Mohiuddin Foundation, Mongla Cement Factory, Chittagong Flour Mills, Savoy bread and

Biscuit Factory, Sena Travels Ltd, Savoy Ice-cream, Sena Kalyan Commercial Foundation etc. The organizations under Army Welfare Trust are Trust Bank Ltd, Trust Filling and CNG Station, Sena Hotel Development Ltd, Kurmitola Golf Club, Army Shopping Complex, Sena Filling Station, Savar Golf Club, Water Garden Hotel Ltd etc.

Here in this context, one could identify the roots of business activities of the Bangladesh Armed Forces in various phases. Among them, first is the presence of historical-behavioral-heritage. It explains that during the liberation struggle, Mukti Bahini was hugely depending on self-financing and external financial support. Even after liberation, the war torned economy of Bangladesh forced the army to find substantial way to develop resources for its own survival. Even the returnees, soldiers, from West Pakistan who were influenced by the professionalism of military and organizational structure also had the same perception. Eventually, they turned to business and maintained a balance in doing their duties and doing business. Second, this attitude of army aggravated by leftist thinking which immensely suggested the concept of transforming the conventional forces into a kind of production oriented army. Third, one could also observe that there is inherited-organizational notion with regard to military business ventures. It was decided to establish the Sena Kalyan Sangstha influenced by a same model of army in Pakistan. Through such military established ventures, they intent to provide social services such as education, housing and medical treatments, pensions, social integration for the troops and their families.

It is to be noted that the Bangladesh military, though engages in business activities, never compromises its main duty to protect the country as there is no direct involvement of army men in the commercial enterprises. At the same time, particularly in the recent political scenarios, army never tries to hijack the democratic set up of the country. It keeps always an adherence to the civilian supremacy over military and civil military cooperation's. So, it is also not possible to eliminate military business out of the civil-military equation. In this environment, it is easy state that there is no military industrial complex and military business complex which poses threats the socio-economy and the democratic development of Bangladesh. To be precise, the the nature of civil military relations seem balanced here again and the official business activities of the military are still on a moderate level.



## 6.26 Observations from the Field: Testing the Realities

After assessing and analyzing the nature and bond of civil military relations in Bangladesh from 1971 to 2012, it is also necessary to synchronize the findings of this study with observations from the field. As part of the study, a field visit has been made to Bangladesh and rigorous interrogations with structured and unstructured questionnaire have been carried out to explore the views and perceptions of academicians, military personnel, political leaders, bureaucrats, research scholars, students etc. on the changing nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh.<sup>1</sup> Some of the eminent academicians from Dhaka university, retired military personnel settled in Dhaka, research scholars of Dhaka university and think tanks bases at Dhaka and Mirpur, local political leaders of the two major parties, Awami League and Bangladesh Nationalist Party, some of the selected officers of Bangladesh Defence Departments etc. are interviewed. Apart from above mentioned segments of society, commoners of Bangladesh society have been interviewed and their perceptions on the role of army in socio, economic and political transformations and the relevance of maintaining stable civil military relations in Bangladesh are recorded. The study intends to cover wide areas of civil military relations, but it seems comparatively difficult to cover the interviews of all the universe of the study. So, sampling method has been employed to collect data based on already prepared interview schedule.

The main objectives of the field visit are to know the level of politicization and factionalism in military, over politicization of civilian system and its impacts on civil military relations in Bangladesh. It examines the trust that Bangladeshis still keep on army in its positive role in transforming the socio, economic and political status of people into better position. The nature of civil military relations in various political developments and phases of Bangladesh, the reasons behind militarized politics and politicized military, the relevance of democratic principles to be followed and replicated to maintain balance civil military relations, the norms and procedures that both civil military have to maintain for the consolidation of democracy, the level of pressure and influence that military exerting on civilian system in the country, the level of factionalism and over politicization of military and civilian system by political parties and leaders, the

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<sup>1</sup> Several interviews including focused group discussions had conducted with academicians, researchers, retired military personnel, political leaders, bureaucrats, students etc. as art of the field visit to Bangladesh from 5<sup>th</sup> October to 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2016. The responses and perceptions based on structured and unstructured questionnaires of all respondents were systematically codified and analyzed.

changing role of army in Bangladesh, suggestions and recommendations to improve civil military relations etc. are other objectives of the study.

The field visit was conducted with two set of questionnaire. Each set has two purposes, first classification of questions reflect to explore facts on the nature of civil military relations phase wise and second section put lights on general understanding on the history, nature and problems of civil military relations in Bangladesh. The first set has the following questions; do you think the General Ziaur Rahman's period after the 1975 coup ushered in a new period of military politics with limited administrative decentralization, continuous political support and legitimacy to unelected government? During 1971-1975, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman began to take steps to bring the military and bureaucracy under political control. But reality of the system was highly personalized, centralized and increasingly oppressive. Is it true? How do you look at this period's civil military relation? After Mujibur Rahman's assassination, there was a period (1976-1981) of political chaos with military coup and counter coups. Do you think the then destabilized political system had far reaching consequences on present days civil military relations in Bangladesh? In 1977, with the Constitutional Amendment Order, Ziaur Rahman removed secularism and replaced it with a commitment to the values of Islam. It had adversely affected the four principles-secularism, nationalism, socialism and democracy-of first Bangladesh government. Was that move made Bangladesh a state vulnerable to military coups?

The others questions as follows; General Ziaur Rahman's regime was essentially a restoration of bureaucratic and military state and during these periods, how was the balance and level of civil military relations these times? during General H. M. Ershad's period, one could observe his attempts to consolidate power through the opening of new lines of patronage that build support across key areas of the military and the bureaucracy. But what were the realities at the vindication level? the first Khaleda Zia BNP government (1991-1996) had marked with cycle of military coups, martial law, civilian military rule, mass movement and systemic collapse. Had it done any contribution or damage to civil military relations in the country? The Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment was enacted in March 1996 and it called for a non party government. How it was this formalized caretaker government system was a good sign for the well running of the state? Sheikh Hasina's Awamy League government (1996-2001) had witnessed attempts to military coups and initiatives to maintain a better civil military system. How was a civil military

relation this period? It was noted that during this period under the Chief of Army staff Gen. Abu Saleh Mohammed Nasim, military was highly politicized and factionalized. There are questions on civil military balance and imbalance in the context of inclusion of religious political parties in the ruling alliance, new military units, formation of Rapid Action Battalion, Operation Clear Heart during Kaleda Zia's second term (2001-2006)? The response to the statement-The confrontational and dysfunctional party politics in Bangladesh led to the formation of military backed caretaker government in 2007-2008 and Since 2009 and after Shahbagh protest, the improvements in country's governance, functioning of political institutions/civil military relations etc. are asked in the study.

In the second set of questions, general observations and questions like the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh in the last four decades, major constitutional and legal provisions and enactments brought out by various governments in Bangladesh to enrich the concepts democracy, secularism and socialism, questions posed civil-military imbalance in Bangladesh and major causes of such imbalances-religious, political or legal, vulnerability of Bangladesh to military coup and political instability, suitable form of government in Bangladesh (military or civilian) and development of political institutions in the transformation of present civil military relations. There are several relevant questions posed in the interview; major phases and evolution of civil military relations in Bangladesh, the social composition of civil military relations and how it influences civil military relations, the levels of institutionalization of military and civilian political procedures, the levels of exerting pressure on government by military for more budgetary allocations, political orientation of military, group politics and factionalism hamper balanced civil military relations and how a balanced civil-military relations help to consolidate a vibrant democracy in Bangladesh.

In the early section of this chapter, it is already discussed and elaborated various phases of civil military relations and the factors which destabilize civil military coordination. Study has reached such an understanding two different theoretical framework; expansion of Marxist Leninist analysis on army and civil military relations in the context of Bangladesh and; the four stages of civil military relations in Bangladesh: Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced. While elucidating four different circumstances, what this study relied on is secondary resources. But the outcome of earlier analysis need to be synchronize with the observations from filed, Bangladesh.

So the coming section examines and explores the views and perceptions of academician, think tanks, research scholar, military personnel, students etc. on the varying nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh.

Dr. Md. Nurul Amin Bepari, a professor from political science department of Dhaka University, claimed that the legacy of civil military relations got molded by two factors; the Pakistani legacy and the Bangladesh National Liberation War. As there was a bitter experience from Pakistan administration, professor agrees the fact that the post liberation civil military relations in Bangladesh mostly got influenced by the developments during liberation struggle. The Pakistani crush down on East Bengalis actually had prompted the leaders of freed nation, Bangladesh, to frame a constitution in which military has more social and economic roles and lesser the authoritarian trends. Dr. Rashid, professor of political science department, Dhaka University, had given a detailed account of the cruelties committed by the Pakistan army on East Bengalis. He says *“for most of the World the genocidal massacre unleashed by Pakistani forces on 26 March 1971 was a much louder and more memorable proclamation of the independence of Bangladesh than any proclamation to that effect that Mujib might have made on the radio. Clearly, Z A Bhutto agreed with Yahya and Tikka’s final solution to their Bangladesh problem and like them, he obviously considered Mujib’s Awami League demand and the hoisting of Bangladesh flags stop buildings all over Dacca a nightmare of facism. The rest of humankind would see the massacre of innocents as every foreign correspondent and most foreign diplomats in Dacca did a dreadful example of the weakness of military terror and the limits of power when it comes to repressing a popular demand for national freedom. Tanks and Trucks fanned out in Pacca and Chittagong, guns boomed and the genocide began.”*

He added that in order to quell the East Bengal threats, Pakistan administration decided to launch an operation called Search Light. According to the plan for operation Search Light, two headquarters were established. Professor memorizes *“Major General Rao Farman Ali with 57 Brigade under Brigedier Arbab was responsible for operation in Dhaka city and its suburbs while Major General Khadim Raja was given the responsibility of the rest of the province. Lieutenant General Tikka Khan assumed the overall charge of the operation. The students and the nationalist political activists put up resistance outside the cantonment. Road blocks were raised to obstruct the march of the Pakistani column to the city areas. The wireless set fitted*

*jeeps and trucks loaded with troops groaned on the streets of Dhaka City at midnight of 25 March. The army moved into the city before scheduled time and started the genocide. The military forces killed everybody in sight on the footpath and destroyed everything on their way. The tanks roared through the streets of Dhaka blasting indiscriminately at the people and official and residential buildings. They gunned down clusters of settlements and set fire on them. Scores of artillery bursts were pounded, while the tanks rumbled into the city roaring the main streets.”*

Since the offensive began the troops have killed countless thousands of Bengalis-foreign diplomats estimate at least 200,000 to 250,000-many in massacres. Although the targets were Bengali Moslems and the 10 million Hindus at first, the army was then concentrating on Hindus in what foreign observers characterize as a holy war. A vengeful army pursues them to the very border of India. Since late last March, when the Pakistani army launched this genocidal attack on the defenseless population of East Pakistan, more than eight million people have been driven from their native land. Millions more will surely follow. Moreover, the refugees have put grave strains on India, pushing India and West Pakistan to the brink of a war that could involve the two arch rivals of the communist world, the Soviet Union and China.

Some of the questions were raised on the role of Mukti Bahini and its fight against a reactionary force Razakars. Why this question remains relevant here as this phase of intense liberation struggle and fight had far reaching impacts on civil military relations. When asked about Mukti Bahini's role in directing all the plots, he says *“it was composed of both men and women, Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, and of thousands of experienced soldiers, besides East Pakistan Rifles (EPR), East Bengal Rifles (EBR), Ansars, intellectuals, students, workers and peasants. They were not fighting for survival but from emancipation from the colonial rule. The main five groups of the forces were EPR, EBR, the police, Ansars, and deserted Bengali personnel from West Pakistan including Navy and Air Force. There are four different phases of Mukti Bahini's involvement in Bangladesh Liberation War. From March 26<sup>th</sup> to May 1971, they made spontaneous resistance by EPR, EBR and police at Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Kushtia, Faridpur and Tangail. From June to September 1971, they had made a strong organizational set up and conducted several guerilla operations. From October to December 1971, Mukti Bahini stepped out of guerilla operations and made some successful movements in Dhaka, Dinajpur, Noakhali, Sylhet, Roumari, Barisal, Fridpur and as well as all over Bangladesh. At the fourth*

*Phase, from December 3 to 6 December, there were several joint operations and Bangladesh witnessed the great success of Mukti Bahini in guerilla warfare.”*

Regarding Razakar, he puts that *“it was the paramilitary force organized by the Pakistan Army during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. It was composed of mostly Bengali collaborators and Urdu-speaking migrants to erstwhile East Pakistan. Initially, the force was under the command of local collaboration committees. But through the East Pakistan Razakar Ordinance, promulgated by General Tikka Khan on 1 June 1971, and a Ministry of Defence, Pakistan, Ordinance, Razakars were recognized as members of the Pakistan Army. Razakars were associated with many of the atrocities and genocides committed by the Pakistan Army during the 9 month war.”*

Razakars had a huge role in killing and throwing millions of East Bengalis into the dark. Within a period of nearly nine months, extending from March 26, 1971 to December 16, 1971, the Pakistan army and militia along with the Razakars allegedly killed 3 million people and raped 300,000 women surpassing the rate of manslaughter during the holocaust. Before the end of the war, the Razakars, along with likeminded but smaller groups called Al-Badr and Al-Shams killed the best intellectuals of the then East Pakistan, which was to emerge as present day Bangladesh. After the war, some of them who remained in Bangladesh were killed in the chaos after liberation, but most of them lived through it. As many as 36,000 of them were arrested but later freed mainly because of pressure from US and China who backed Pakistan in the war, and because Pakistan was holding 200,000 Bengali speaking military and civilian personnel who were stranded in West Pakistan during the war.

Abdur Rahman, a Ph. D scholar, department of International Relations, Dhaka University, seemed to be very vocal about the consequences of martial law when it was used in the land of Bangladesh. He pointed out to reasons behind the deterioration of civil military relations. First, the vulnerability of Bangladesh political system to resort to martial law and second; politicized military. He adds, *“the Constitution of Bangladesh does not envisage the imposition of martial law. Throughout the text of the Constitution, no reference has been made to Matial Law. Although the term martial law had duly occurred in Article 196 of the 1956 Constitution of Pakistan and Article 223-A of the 1962 Constitution of Pakistan, the Articles which enacted provisions for passing an Act of Indemnity in relation to acts done in connection with Martial*

*Law Administration, it has significantly been omitted from corresponding Article 463 of the Constitution of Bangladesh that empowered parliament to pass an Act of Indemnity in respect of any act done in connection with the national liberation struggle or the maintenance or restoration of order in any area in Bangladesh.”* This shows that although in Pakistan Articles 196 and 223 (A) of the 1956 and 1962 Constitutions respectively, recognized the possibility that Martial law might be imposed under the common law doctrine of necessity for the purpose of the maintenance or restoration of order in any area in Pakistan.

No such recognition was given in Bangladesh where the phrase martial law was omitted from the analogous Article 46 of the Constitution of Bangladesh. Therefore, it appears that in the Constitution of Bangladesh there is no provision whatsoever for the imposition of martial law under any circumstances even for the sake of restoring law and order. But, he adds that, *“martial law was imposed unconstitutionally in Bangladesh twice- first, on the 15th August, 1975 and second, on the 24th March, 1982. On 15th August, 1975 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the then President of Bangladesh was brutally killed with his family members by a military coup.”* Following this assassination martial law was declared throughout the country. Khandaker Mostaque Ahmed assumed the office of the President. Though martial law was imposed, the Constitution was not suspended; it was to remain in force subject to martial law proclamation, regulations, orders etc.

*“For the second time martial law was imposed by the then Chief of Army Lieutenant General Hussain Muhammad Ershad ousting the civil government of Justice Abdus Sattar on 24th March, 1982. This time the Constitution was suspended. This martial was kept in force for 4 years and 7 months. On 10th November, 1986 General Ershad legalised his regime through a parliament which was elected during the continuance of martial law and on the next day martial law was withdrawn”*, He continues. It is pertinent to note here that in Bangladesh the legality of the declaration of martial law was not discussed by the Supreme Court in any case either during the continuance of or even after the withdrawal of martial law. There was also the third time in Bangladesh military intervention into politics was made on 11th January, 2006 in the wake of political unrest before the 9th Parliamentary election. This intervention did not follow any declaration of martial law; nor was the constitution suspended; it was class part intervention and the consequence and aftermath of this intervention is yet to ripen into politics.

Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman, a professor of Department of International Relations, Dhaka University, opined that Bangladesh has been hijacked by two major political parties, so as the democracy. The tradition and energy that Bangladesh has gained after sacrificing lakhs of valuable lives is missed today. Both parties and their faction based politics even distorted the history of Bangladesh. He cited an example, says, *“the information ministry compiled and published the documentary evidence of the Liberation War in 15 parts in 1982. The Liberation War affairs ministry, set up during the BNP alliance regime, changed some of the facts in the second edition published in 2004. It deleted the first document of the third part that contained Declaration of Independence made in the name of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and broadcast from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra on March 26, 1971. Instead, it included a document stating that Major Ziaur Rahman first declared independence from Biplobi Betar Kendra on March 27, wherein he claimed to be the provisional president and commander-in-chief of the liberation army.”* Such kind of political attempts have been done by both parties to add or lessen the role of both in historical liberation struggle. It also points fingers to the attempts to discredit the role of collective East Bengal movement in liberation struggle, instead it tries to give all credit to the military rulers.

On the nature of army in Bangladesh and their intention throughout the independent history, Professor Zaman remarks that *“the army had its own complicated internal and structural problem over politics. At the crisis stages, there was convergence of perceptions among the military leaders and three different viewpoints emerged following the imposition of the emergency at any stages of political developments in Bangladesh; first is that the military should maintain its distance from politics, the second prefer a direct role in politics and the last preferred to stay behind the scene. Clearly, there were a strong factions and elements within the military in favour of continuing to govern. Whenever, they met with differences and contradictions, it led to adverse measures to initiate, for example the minus-two formula.”*

During the time of caretaker government at various phases of state's life in Bangladesh, military seems apparently active. Professor Choudhury Rafiqul Abdar, professor in department of International Relations, Dhaka University, views that *“Apart from its political role in directing the state to keep away from authoritarian ways and move close to democratic set up, the army was visible in other areas where a normal military set ups hardly involve. It was clearer during*



*the fourth caretaker government's period. In continuation with the anti-corruption drive of civilian governments, the army carried out constant raids against number of officers, political leaders etc. it was believed that the arrest and interrogation of high profile leaders and officers on charges of corruption could not have happened without the assistance of army. Other activities like unearthing of stolen relief supplies, demolition of unauthorised structures, retrieval of illegal vehicles and confiscation of endangered animals etc. had happened because of the military's full-fledged operations. The military wing of the government was very active during food crisis of 2008, cyclone and also in various other relief operations during these periods. It is also to be remembered that lentil and rice programme of the para-military forces, which opened 75 outlets, to provide basic necessities at subsidized rates."*

At the same time, it was also noted that during 2007-2008, army had opportunity to take over power from the turbulent situations of Bangladesh. But it kept calm and took sensible decision to keep aloof from such military coups. Professor Shahiduzzaman, International Relations, Dhaka University, says that *"during 2007 to 2008, the then army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed, could have dethrone the President and forcefully taken over power particularly internal scuffle, skirmishes and crises reached its helm. But military heads of the state decided to help the caretaker government instead of plunging the whole Bangladesh into chaos. It did not happen in a way as it was about to happen. The most relevant reason for this new tendency of army it's hesitance to not to lose the popularity that it is having since independence. The army leaders also recognized the unpopularity of military rule and refrained from repeating past mistakes."*

At the same time, military backed caretaker government was totally de-politicized and it never got pressurized and influenced by any of the political parties' agenda. Professor Humayun Kabir, Islamic Studies and Culture, Dhaka University, clarifies that *"the caretaker government was strong enough to function as a professional body totally obedient to democratic principles of the state and never got influenced by political agendas. Bangladesh had a history of political parties who over politicized each and every aspects of institutionalized state structure. Whoever comes to power, they bring their political ideologies without considering the actual interests and demands of people. Consequently, each political parties use their ruling tenure to impose undemocratic norms and practices on people. Such situations aggravated and became problematic. Institutional structure of the state system was manipulated. But the caretaker or*

*interim system was initiated to ensure and enhance the credibility of the first multiparty elections held in 1991 and was subsequently institutionalized in 1996. Such new phase gave two advantages; first it ensures a surveillance system in place on all ruling parties and second; it always maintain good balance between civilian and military.”*

But when military personnel were interviewed, the responses reflect the disappointment of military personnel about the way Bangladesh political system operates, the way political leaders of the country spoil their government’s reputations and names, increasing corruptions, factionalism, emergence of religious fundamentalism and terror elements etc. When question posed about the military coups and militarized political phases of the country, there were personnel even dared to question the politically motivated moves of military leaders of earlier Bangladesh. Responses of some of the retired military personal reiterated the fact that still the people of Bangladesh keep immense trust and belief on Bangladesh army as it was the only factor which played pivotal role in creating a new nation in South Asia.

Mohammed Umar, a 64 year old retired army personnel from Bangladesh Army cites that the *“factionalism within the army which prior to the Pakistani military suppression had existed between various Bengali personnel of the armed forces was renewed by Mujib Rahman’s post liberation preferential treatment of the Jatio Rakkhi Bahini. What bothered Mujib most about the regular army was the combination of internal conflict and the army’s growing disenchantment with the League government. This combination became too explosive for the civilian government to handle particularly when the contending factions within the army started drawing active support from different groups which had once taken up arms against the Pakistanis.”*

Civil military relations suffered owing to a number of Mujib’s contradictory decisions. A senior military officer adds *“that both during and after liberation war, Awami legislators tried to control and direct decision making within the regular Bangladesh liberation army. In their efforts to keep the army under control, they did two things during the civil war. Mukti Bahini was organized to counterbalance not only the independent minded Bengali army but also the Mukti Bahini and other freedom fighters belonging to different ideological groups. With Mujib held in incommunicado in a West Pakistan prison, the commanders of the Bengali liberation forces*

*chose to make their own decisions about the war, unhindered by Awami League politicians and legislators”.*

After Bangladesh’s independence, civil military relations took a turn for the worse. While asking about this new turn in the history of Bangladesh’s civil military relations a retired personal, Mr. Aminul Zulfikur, comments that *“despite massive infighting, the new Bangladesh army shared distrust towards civilian rule. Bengali officers felt that League legislators were trying to drive a wedge between Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the army in order to avenge their powerlessness in directing the Bengali guerilla operation during the war. The army’s aid to civil actions also resulted in the arrest of a few League legislators on charges of hoarding, black marketing and smuggling, which did not endear them to League politicians.”*

Even though Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other military leaders were at the top of state power, there were several revolutionary wings within the military, who had played huge role in national liberation war, tried to disturb the system constantly. Paramilitary forces like Biplobi Gano Bahini, Biplobi Sainik Parishad, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal etc. created havocs and scary environments within military and it always question the credibility of democratic governance. At the same time, Zia and Ershad kept military under scanning and observation as they scared of disturbances within military. The Bangladesh army had been divided into four different divisions during these periods. The intention was to divide it and reduce the possibilities of more coups.

An officer reminds that *“during Ziaur Rahman’s period, he struggled a lot to compromise with the revolutionary elements within the army. He attempted to ensure military stability by following a scheme. The essence of the scheme was to diffuse the power of the armed forces by raising new divisions and spreading the existing brigades, regiments and battalions in such a way that both officers and soldiers loyalty to the regime would be ensured by careful distribution of forces among different regions. In addition, the armed forces were encouraged to work close with the para-military forces.”*

Another retired military officer, Rahim Shamzeer, adds that *“after 1991, the relevance of revolutionary aspects within military started deteriorating. The re-introduction of democracy and consolidation of democratic institutions had given platform to civilians to keep military tight under national assembly. The post 1991 politics in Bangladesh has witnessed a new phase in*

*civil military relations. The militarized politics of Bangladesh had been replaced by politicized military. Military has been used by various political parties and its heads to take revenge on their opponents and the civilian system stands over politicized. The mal treatment of military personnel and employing them for political purposes hurt the morale of military too. The funding was reduced and government's hardly considered any adequate financial allocation for Army Welfare Trust."*

Political leaders shared mixed responses to questions on the nature of civil military relations and the relevance of civilian supremacy over military. One local leader, Mr. Bikku Mohamed, associated with Awami League mentioned that there should not be any balance between government and military. This is modern era, era of democracy where government of the people surpasses all other organs of the state. So as military, it should come under the civilian control and must be used for maintenance of law and order. Responses to questions on socio, political and economic role of military, he adds that “ *I don't think military must be assigned with such roles, it has only one function, that is protection of Bangladeshis from any threats.*” A Dhaka based leader of Bangladesh National Party, Amirul Islam, opined that so far as the last few decades of Bangladesh politics is concerned, military has been totally restricted to some business and commercial enterprises areas. In another way, civilian systems made military busy with some social business and by doing so, the rulers of the state reduced the role of military in social development. The Awami League wants to have a military set up in Bangladesh on Indian model.

When asked about the vulnerability of Bangladesh political system to military intervention particularly in early periods, Mr. Muhammed Ashique Rahman, a research fellow, BIIS, says that “*military intervention in politics is not a new phenomenon. It has been wide spread and long standing. More than two thirds of the third world countries have already experienced it and many more are likely to do so in the future and not without reasons. The thinkers have found that there are three sets of variable responsible for this trend. The capability of the military derived principally from its organizational nature such as internal cohesion and discipline, hierarchy and unified command, is one of these. The second is related to the corporate interest of the military; any threat to the corporate interests of the military generates interventionist motives the third refers to the weaknesses of the political system such as fragility of political institutions*

*and chronic political instability, lack of consensual leadership and legitimacy of the ruling elite. These weaknesses provide occasion to intervene.”*

In order to draw the understanding and perceptions of research scholars and students on civil military relations in Bangladesh, a focused group discussion has been conducted at Political Science and International Relations Departments of Dhaka University. Majority of them have similar views on the political will of their leaders. They stated that irrespective of any political parties, whoever comes to ruling regime, Bangladesh has witnessed high level of lobbying of various institutions, unconstitutional practices, imbalance in civil military relations etc. but they agree with the fact that military still maintains popular trust because of its involvement in liberation movement. Some students argue that Bangladesh still doesn't develop descent political culture. Electoral violence and seasonal political murders ruined reputation of Bangladesh. There was also time in Bangladesh when the military are power hungry and political leaders are rootless. Students added that the unspelled assumption is that unless the political system and force in the country are transformed or altered substantially, no amount of sloganing will help restore and maintain a democratic system. That kind of balance through substantial changes is needed to maintain better civil military relations in Bangladesh.

So, responses of all respondents on the nature and issue areas of civil military relations in Bangladesh sounds that the political system in Bangladesh behaves in undemocratic manner since the inception. Whenever new regime comes on power, they start behaving like authoritarian and try to exert pressure on other wings of the state. Whenever military took charge of power, it happened because of over ambitious and over politicized leaders. Majority of the political systems in the third world and least developed countries are prone to military intervention. The highly developed capitalist states and the centrally planned ones have two things in common. The one refers to the broadbased consensus among the politically relevant sections of population on the nature of political power, mode of its exercise, procedure for transferring it, nature of incumbents for other things. The other refers to the depth and strength of organizational cohesiveness that bind the political groups in these societies in such associations as trade unions, churches, political parties, occupational groups and other organizations. The societal consensus accords legitimacy to the civilian authorities and organizational alacrity strengthen political institutions, which eventually ward off military intervention in politics. The

Bangladesh political system has been deficient on both counts. It is not surprising therefore that Bangladesh is one of those states which have been coup prone states. It is not right to put blame on either on the military or civilian politicians for a prolonged military rule in the country. On one account both the military elite and political leaders are to be blamed in that preachings and activities of both these groups have miserably failed to generate a broadbased consensus and strengthen organizational bases in the country.

### **6.27 Conclusion**

The chapter started with analyzing the relevance of Marxist Leninist Analysis on army and an attempt has been made to understand civil military relations by introducing three different stages. First, the role of army in assisting proletariats or common mass to gain socio-economic and political freedom from bourgeoisie or colonial masters or imperialist leaders or any ruling regimes; second, role of army in the socio economic and political transformation of society; and third, revolutionary role of army in stabilizing the civilian system. One could easily locate these three stages of civil military relations in the political life of Bangladesh. The study found that these newly derived three stages could be replicated in the context of Bangladesh. The challenge of this three pronged approach can be seen particularly at third stage where a destabilised political system expects the introduction of revolutionary force. Revolutionary, here, does not mean anything out of rule of law or against any democratic set up. But it does mean that the reformatory role of army in stabilizing the political system and play a pivotal role in social and economic development.

The core section of this chapter is the introduction of a new trajectory of four stages, Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced, as already discussed above. There were number of studies on civil military relations in Bangladesh, but no study has used Marxist understanding on army and civil military relations. The justifications to this new method explain the fact that the military in Bangladesh has been assigned with socio, economic and political reformer's role. But throughout the political history of Bangladesh, it observes that whole system has been operated under two disdaining factor; militarized politics and politicized military. At various levels of political phases, the relation between civil and military in Bangladesh was not normal. The reason behind the exploration of these four stages is to measure and analyse the nature of civil military in Bangladesh based on the political developments and processes. The study has tested the

credibility of four stages by analyzing the political decisions on army, militarized politics and politicization of army. It is found that the study finds success while relying on these four stages to elucidate the nature and causes of imbalanced civil military relations in Bangladesh.

The findings of the study are synchronize and tested with the field visit report. The responses of all respondents on the nature and issue areas of civil military relations in Bangladesh sounds that the political system in Bangladesh behaves in undemocratic manner since the inception. In continuation with four stage analysis, study found that whenever new regime comes on power, they start behaving like authoritarian and try to exert pressure on other wings of the state. The military's attempt to take charge of state's power is happening because of over ambitious and over politicized leaders. The conclusion of the study indicates that in a country like Bangladesh where political institutions are weak and unstable and the political elite have to depend quite often on the military for day to day administration, they are not likely to stay longer in power by injuring the corporate interest of the military. The situation therefore demands gifted civilian and military leaderships willing to overriding precedence to the supreme interests of the society. In other words, civilian leaders should acknowledge that the military constitute an essential arm of the government and the military leadership also realize that only political institutions are capable of fashioning a broadbased consensus in and giving a direction to the society.

## **Chapter VII**

### **Conclusion**



## Chapter VII

### Conclusion

In the well-functioning and balancing of civil military relations in a developing country, it is expected that there would not be martial law declaration, not any abrogation of laws and authoritarian rule; instead there should be maximum amount of democratic norms in the working of government and constitutional obligation. The long standing fight of East Pakistanis against the neo-colonial and ruthless administration of West Pakistanis aimed the establishment of Bangladesh state based on democratic order and principles. The study found that the Pakistani period of Bangladesh had actually laid the foundations for civil military relations rather than British, India and Pakistani legacies. Though there was no established civil military elements in East Pakistan during liberation war, the presence of Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the role of Mukti Bahini with other revolutionary forces were involved in a process to establish a new state where the role of both civil military would be equally relevant. But what Bangladesh had experienced after independence is the emergence of new governing elite, introduction of one party system and intense rift between the repatriated and participated wings of army. The soft authoritarian nature of Mujibur Rahman and his attempt to form a para-military force to contain the challenges within army eventually spoiled the civil military balance and led to the murder of Mujibur Rahman. It proved that either undemocratic civilian or military intervention into the ruling mechanism can be resulted in chaos and destabilize the system as a whole.

Bangladesh's last 4 decades political history has seen several political experiments like Soviet type one part totalitarian administration under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, military rules, parliamentary and presidential forms of government and military backed care taker governments. One can say that the army is an integral part of Bangladeshi society as its involvement in the struggle for independence was huge and unmemorable. It's a fact that the army keeps a close watch to observe that there is no blatant abuse of power and resources by those who are in power. Bangladesh has seen the army set a healthy precedent to not stretching a helping hand to General Ershad when he wanted to cling to his office after clearly losing confidence of the people. It was also evident that a military coup in May 1996 mounted by General Mohammed

Nasim failed as the army supported the civilian President Abdur Rahman Biswas with a view to protect and uphold constitutional principles, upholding the institutional character of the army and maintaining the credibility of the government before the aid donor countries. During 2007-2008, Bangladesh experienced the good sides of balanced civil military relations. Army even had opportunities to take the control of the country but it maintained decorum and followed constitutional and democratic provisions. It given full support to caretaker government to balance the equilibrium and conducted a fair election. So here, one could observe the relevance of improved civil military relations in making Bangladesh a peaceful and developing country.

Civil-Military Relations very much depends on day-to-day interactions between political leadership and military leadership. But some incidents in the short history of Bangladesh mirrored the course of sweet-sour relation between them. Bangladesh Liberation war of 1971, Military coup in 1975 August, Killings on the 3rd November and the 7th November 1975 up-rise in cantonments, Ershad's military coup in 1982 without bloodshed, A brief military disorder in 1996, Proxy role-play of the military together with previous care taker government 2007-2008, BDR mutiny in 2009 and a failed military coup in December, 2011 etc. made some irreparable changes on civil military relations. A historical understanding of Bangladesh military, which inherited from Punjabi dominated military bureaucracy, helped this study to identify the changes in military structure that introduced after independence. The study proven that the level of politicization of civil society and military was high and intense in Bangladesh throughout all these years.

One who has observed the political phases and political developments in Bangladesh understands it well that the language movement led to the birth of Bangladesh after a bloody liberation war and its political history of four decades is full of turbulent and traumatic events. The motivated and victorious political and military leaders of 1971 Bangladesh were indeed duly prompt in laying the foundations for parliamentary democracy and regularized by including provisions in the Constitution adopted in November 1972. But unfortunately, it was amended drastically in January 1975 to provide for a one party presidential system. The early political experiments had caused decays on civil military relations in Bangladesh too. Politically hijacked parliamentary democracy, highly militarized civilian system, politicized civilian system, one party and soft authoritarian system, experiments like consensus, cohabitation and coalition etc. have been

producing and re producing hindrances for a well-functioned civil military equations and co-operations.

From august 1975 to 1990, Bangladesh was virtually ruled by the civil military autocrats. The political attempts of the military leaders to stay on power by legalizing their positions actually re-emphasized the fact that civilian autocracy would be the finest possible democratic option rather military autocracy. General assumption is that military constitutes trained and skilled personnel is not supposed to rule the country but they are assigned with protecting citizens from external and internal threats. So there should be a civilian system based on deliberate democracy and it creates an institutionalized, well maintained and balanced civil military relations. But equation turns when civilian system manipulates its arms and wings. Eventually, the balance in civil military relations start deteriorating and lead to situations called - militarized politics and politicized military. Following the national assembly elections in 1991, Bangladesh was able to return to a parliamentary polity again when the members of the 5<sup>th</sup> parliament agreed to adopt the Twelfth Constitution Amendment Act in September 1991. The unanimity that the parliament members shown to work on the basis of democratic norms actually given the impression it would nurture better civil military relations in future. But the post Amendment euphoria of excitement of people soon began to subsidize in the wake of the ruling party's un-parliamentary acts. Later, it paid the penalty of losing power for its obstinate on the Caretaker Government issue.

It is clear that civil military relations require well established democratic base and the way government works should not be based on any undemocratic ideological inclinations. After 1991, it was true that the Bangladesh Nationalist Party seemingly diffident in policy decisions and nonchalant to parliamentary norms. It led to the Awami League rule again and seemed to have taken a tactical move in forming a sort of consensus government, appeared tolerant towards opposition and policy making styles were better than before. But it was alleged that institutions like the Public Service Commission was turned into the depot of corruptions, nepotism and party politics. The five years of AL rule was characterized by terrorism, unabated corruption, politicization of administration etc. Consequently, it again spoiled civil military relations in Bangladesh. Followed by AL government, Begum Kahled Zia's four party alliances came to power and had been riddled by unscrupulous elements inside and outside the government fold. Thereafter, in alternative five years both AL and BNP ruled the country, but the nature of all

these governments' derailed civil military relations from its natural flow. It would not be an exaggeration if one states that the nature of political system in Bangladesh has positive and negative impacts on civil military relations. All most all the parties in Bangladesh have been adopting authoritarian model to run their respective parties. Authoritarianism begets autocracy and each party carry out the same political perception when they come to power. Instead of such tendencies, ruling as well as opposition parties should get themselves involved in a dialogue and debate both inside and outside of the parliament and they should try to find out mutually agreeable solutions on each issues.

This study highlighted some of the major shifts and changes happened in the sweet and sour relations of civil military in Bangladesh. From 1971 to 2012, the study has identified 9 politicaldifferent phases in civil military relations. Though there were civilian autocracies, parliamentary democracy, military autocracy and even one party authoritarian political set ups, all affected civil military relations badly. It was all because of two relevant factors in Bangladesh politics; factionalism and politicization. Irrespective of any forms of governance, civil-military relations in this country was hampered till a point of period. This gives the impression that either civilian or military power's manoeuvres aggravated the army's structural instability born of the Liberation war heritage. Various regimes, particularly military, have degraded, destabilized and undemocratized civil military relations in Bangladesh. Although operating based on corruption which seriously and deeply hampered the institution, General Ershad's period pressurized the military to go back to its conventional tasks, protecting the country from external aggression. But before him, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's soft authoritarian rule and his attempt to silence his opponents by forming a new para military force apart from main military force actually triggered a bad civil military flow.

Ziaur Rahman was no exception in maintaining military autocracy in the country though he wanted to develop a professional military highly obedient to the civilian system. Till 1991, Bangladesh was going through politically turbulent stages which had destabilize and imbalance the just born civil military establishments. This period was replaced by the introduction of democracy and the return of civilians to power in 1991. At the same time, the nation witnessed politicized state system and triggered permanent confrontational politics between the two main parties and threatened the stability of civil-military relations. Even after 1991, there were several

incidences that reveal the politicized military and using military for political purposes. Khaleda Zia's regime from 2001-2006 had also again put the civil military relations in trouble. She was blamed for using army for taking revenge on her political opponents. The terrible situation forced the army to intervene and a military backed caretaker government came into being. This period has been considered as the golden era in civil military relations in Bangladesh. The momentum was continued during Sheikh Hasina's period from 2009-2013. But the military coup in 2009 and attempt for a military coup in 2011 had revealed that the civil military relations have not been established yet in Bangladesh.

After 2006, Bangladesh has gone again back to military backed caretaker government. In terms of civil military relations, the study identified this period can be marked as golden era. The failure to reach a consensus between the AL and the BNP, President Iajuddin cancelled the election and imposed a state of emergency. A caretaker government was appointed under the leadership of Fakhruddin and he sought help from the military which established a National Coordination Committee against Crime and Corruption headed by the 9th Infantry Division's General Officer Commanding (GOC), Major General Masud Uddin Chowdhury and which drafts in all seven GOCs as members. It was remarkably noted that both caretaker government and military were never shown any hesitance to transfer power to the newly elected government. As a matter of fact, civil military relations seemed to be improved these days. It was carried and maintained during the 9<sup>th</sup> political regime under Sheikh Hasina. To be precise, though alternate political parties have been manipulating the army's hierarchy and distorting its prestige while re-awakening its political factions, the military actually showed its commitment towards democratic principles and its eagerness to engage in commercial enterprises.

The study also found that different political phases, ideologies and clash between civilian and military heads have direct and indirect consequences on civil military relations in Bangladesh. The state of Bangladesh has started its political life with lots of issues and lack of resources. It was the struggle over these irreconcilable visions of the future that shook the edifice of the Bangladesh state in 1975. Mujibur Rahman's constitutional coup d'état of January, had a plan to establish civilian autocracy. Immediately counter-forces built up, resulting in Mujib's assassination on 15 August and the installation of a military-backed government. This in turn was overthrown by a second military coup on 3 November, followed by a third on 7

November. The man who now emerged as Bangladesh's ruler was Major-General Ziaur Rahman and his first act was to ban political parties and crack down on the left parties that had inspired radical soldiers to carry out the last coup, planned as a soldiers' revolution in the service of the oppressed classes. This had invited several other issues in civil military relation as it given much prominence for revolutionary elements in military. By the end of 1975 Bangladesh had turned its back on both Mujib's vision and the revolutionary path. The new regime of Ziaur Rahman (1975-81) marked a decisive break in the country's economic policies. The regime of Ziaur Rahman also marked a decisive break in another sense: the emergence of military dominance in post-independence Bangladesh. Generals have ruled Bangladesh the next fifteen years and even after a popular uprising overthrew military rule in 1990, the army never really went back to the barracks. It has continued and dispensed power behind the throne of successive civilian governments up to the present.

The regime of Ziaur Rahman was followed by that of another general, Hussain Muhammad Ershad (1982-1990). In both cases a military man seized power, cancelled basic rights and banned political parties in return for promises of swift development and a squeaky-clean administration. Though there were several attempts to professionalize military, but nothing has been made to improve the civil military relations. A military-backed civilian government took over for some months before Chief of Staff Ershad overthrew it, thus becoming Bangladesh's second dictator. Ershad was forced out of power by a popular uprising in 1990. Since then the military have left the top positions in the state to civilians. The political system that evolved in Bangladesh between 1975 and 1990 was one in which the judicial and legislative branches became hostage to military-controlled executive power. In this period civil rights were much more curtailed than they had been in the initial years after independence. This was something that many citizens of Bangladesh refused to accept. Throughout the fifteen-year period of military rule, many Bangladeshis strove for a return to parliamentary democracy against forces that tried hard to shield the state from popular influence. Their efforts culminated in a prolonged and widespread campaign of agitation in 1990, which finally managed to dislodge military rule, topple the Ershad regime and force a return to parliamentary democracy.

The return to civilian rule was widely celebrated in Bangladesh. Many saw it as a clean break with the immediate past and a fresh start for a truly democratic Bangladesh. Three legacies in

particular have persisted: a struggle between incompatible visions of the nation, the rise of Islamist politics and an inability to accommodate regional autonomy. The main political legacy of the period of military rule was the emergence of an alternative view of the nation. Zia had sought to gain legitimacy for his military regime by constructing a political party and having it stand in elections that he controlled. The party that Zia created, in 1978, was the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). Its ideology was nationalist conservatism and after Zia's death in 1981 his widow Khaleda Zia was appointed as the leader and despite her political inexperience, she held most the party together. Under her leadership the BNP grew into a formidable political force. At the same time, Zia's successor, Ershad, created his own party, more right wing than the BNP. It took the name Jatiyo (National) Party in 1986. Unlike the BNP, the Jatiyo Party never played more than a minor role after parliamentary democracy was restored. After Ershad's fall, elections for the national parliament were held in 1991. But positive impacts of all these political developments remained untouched on civil military relations in Bangladesh.

The parliamentary elections held in 1996 and it cemented the dominance of the two leading parties. In 1996 the Awami League won with 38 per cent (BNP 34 per cent) and in 1996 BNP won with 41 per cent (Awami League 40 per cent). This unofficial two-party parliamentary system hit a snag in 2006, however, when elections planned for 2007 had to be postponed because of wide-spread pre-election violence. A military-backed interim government took over in early 2,007 and postponed the elections to 2008, fuelling worries that parliamentary democracy is once again in jeopardy. In 2009, Awami League came back to power with thumping majority. Opposition had rejected the election result as a huge chunk of population did not participate in the election and they called the then government as undemocratic. The period from 2009 to 2013 was marked number of political events including 2009 BDR mutiny, 2011 military attempt for a coup, constitutional amendment, death punishment for war criminals etc. But people had a feeling that there is a stable government and that stability needs for a peaceful and developing Bangladesh.

Throughout the political history of Bangladesh, military has been an integral part and continue to influence the political life. The nexus and close bond of civil military relations were formed at the time of Bangladesh struggle and it has institutionalized to some extent after Bangladesh got independence. The cooperation of civilian population and forces of the Mukti Bahini joined

hands against the military establishment of erstwhile West Pakistan for two reasons; one was to prevent Pakistan army's crack down on Bengalis and second was to gain political freedom from Pakistan. Since the creation of Bangladesh, it has been visible that two major political parties use military to handle political crisis created by them. Pro Pakistan role of some of the political factions in the country and Awami League's national projection as secular party of all Bengali have direct repercussions on army for whenever they come on power, each takes revengeful stands on other.

It is a fact that Bangladesh freedom struggle and state's creation based on democratic principles cleared the gap between the civilians and armed forces. Both civilians and military personnel were aware of the nature of historically weak political leadership in East Bengal and inconsistent political institutions. Such bifurcations have led to confrontations between two segments of politically divided army and again led to the assassination of Mujib. The outcome was the initiation of military rule. Followed by a number of political and military moves and incidences military consolidated its influence on politics. The primary observation on militarization and assassination of Mujibur Rahman was first government to convert Bangladesh into a single party system. Soon after, Bangladesh had been witnessed several military rule and military rulers attempt to silence their opponents by using force and legal measures. From August 1975 to December 1990, Bangladesh remained under military rule, and it resulted in the beginning of a poorly managed civil military relations. Though there are constitutional and defence ministry obligations for military to follow, all remained unpracticed. In between, Bangladesh saw a new approach by military leaders to legalise their military rule by forming new political parties. Such legitimacy gaining attempts would be at two ways; to ensure a wider political role for the military and realization of the relevance of democratic governance. But military put its hands everywhere and through a number of means, the armed forces enhanced its influence and pressure.

Early political phases of Bangladesh have given army an impetus and stimulant role in the polity and society. But it was also lugged with generous patronization and generous offers. Eventually, the military secured an effective control and managing mechanism over non-military organisations. Bu the fall of General Ershad in the year 1990 saw a new twist where military started losing its grips on politics. In 1991, multiparty elections were introduced and two of three



parties which dominated Bangladeshi politics had strong military connections, namely the BNP and Jatiya. Such unholy nexus and connections are seen when look at the increase in defence allocation by civilian governments and it was ensured to give continuous green signal to the armed forces. Though the military downplayed its political linkages in the post-1990 environment, it could be noted that army still enjoys political concessions and voice in the political structure of the country. But, anyway, there was shift happened when civilian control on military got strengthened. The military has been used for nonmilitary functions and army has often been called to help the civilian administration in the restoration of law and order, relief and disaster management activities, and anti-terror campaigns.

It is also noted that civil-military equations and cooperation's are moving in a zigzag way. During the second tenure of Khaleda Zia (2001-06), the army was actively involved in two law and order operations namely, Operation Clean Heart (16 October 2002–January 2003) and Operation Spider Web (20 July–14 August 2003). But army was blamed continuously for killing innocent people on the name of such operations. Two other factors have enabled the military to have a greater say in the running of the country. Firstly, Bangladesh has had three military governments headed by Khondakar Mustaque (1975), Ziaur Rahman (1977–81), and HM Ershad (1982–90). Besides these, there have been as many as 18 coup attempts between 1975 and 1990. Secondly, both military and civilian governments have been appointing retired service personnel at senior positions in the government and government-owned institutions. A large number of service officers have become diplomats, heads of government agencies or public operations.

Thus, civil-military relations in Bangladesh are characterized by number of phases in which an unhealthy contest between military encroachment upon politics and healthy popular opposition to authoritarian trends are also visible. There were occasions people demanded the army to intervene in politics and administration of the country. And there were occasions too people kept tight army inside the barrack. But what is essentially and immediately needed is substantial and balanced civil military relations for that military has to strictly follow the civilian prospects and civilian administrations have to strictly follow and fulfill the constitutional obligations. Moreover, people's participation in the democratic procedures of the country would also be essential. They need to make the nature of governance and government more legal and democratic, for that a higher number of voter turnout in each elections is necessary. So, it is

concluded that a high level of participation of people in the political reforms of the country develop a mere government to generate strong political reforms, which would finally help to maintain a balanced civil military relations in Bangladesh.

The study identified the relevance of Marxist Leninist Analysis on army and an attempt has been made to understand civil military relations by introducing three different stages. First, the role of army in assisting proletariat or common mass to gain socio-economic and political freedom from bourgeoisie or colonial masters or imperialist leaders or any ruling regimes; second, role of army in the socio economic and political transformation of society; and third, revolutionary role of army in stabilizing the civilian system. One could easily locate these three stages of civil military relations in the political life of Bangladesh. The study found that these newly derived three stages could be replicated in the context of Bangladesh. The challenge of this three pronged approach can be seen particularly at third stage where a destabilized political system expects the introduction of revolutionary force. Revolutionary, here, does not mean anything out of rule of law or against any democratic set up. But it does mean that the reformatory role of army in stabilizing the political system and play a pivotal role in social and economic development.

The study has introduced a new trajectory of four stages: Progressive, Trivial, Transitory and Balanced. There were number of studies on civil military relations in Bangladesh and the justifications to this new method explain the fact that the military in Bangladesh has been assigned with socio, economic and political reformer's role. But throughout the political history of Bangladesh, it observes that whole system has been operated under two disdaining factor; militarized politics and politicized military. At various levels of political phases, the relation between civil and military in Bangladesh was not normal. The reason behind the exploration of these four stages is to measure and analyse the nature of civil military in Bangladesh based on the political developments and processes. The study has tested the credibility of four stages by analyzing the political decisions on army, militarized politics and politicization of army. It is found that the study finds success while relying on these four stages to elucidate the nature and causes of imbalanced civil military relations in Bangladesh.

The study attempted to synchronise the findings of the study with the field visit report. The responses of all respondents on the nature and issue areas of civil military relations in Bangladesh sounds that the political system in Bangladesh behaves in undemocratic manner

since the inception. In continuation with four stage analysis, study found that whenever new regime comes on power, they start behaving like authoritarian and try to exert pressure on other wings of the state. The military's attempt to take charge of state's power is happening because of over ambitious and over politicized leaders. The study indicated that in a country like Bangladesh where political institutions are weak and unstable and the political elite have to depend quite often on the military for day to day administration, they are not likely to stay longer in power by injuring the corporate interest of the military. The situation therefore demands gifted civilian and military leaderships willing to overriding precedence to the supreme interests of the society. In other words, civilian leaders should acknowledge that the military constitute an essential arm of the government and the military leadership also realized that only political institutions are capable of fashioning a broad-based consensus in and giving a direction to the society.

Post 2000 Bangladesh politics exposed a new nature of military. It is found that the armed forces are engaged in number of other activities which are commercial in nature. This study identified the roots of business activities of the Bangladesh Armed Forces in various phases. Among them, first is the presence of historical-behavioral-heritage. It explains that during the liberation struggle, Mukti Bahini was hugely depending on self-financing and external financial support. Even after liberation, the war torned economy of Bangladesh forced the army to find substantial way to develop resources for its own survival. Even the returnees, soldiers, from West Pakistan who were influenced by the professionalism of military and organizational structure also had the same perception. Eventually, they turned to business and maintained a balance in doing their duties and doing business. Second, this attitude of army aggravated by leftist thinking which immensely suggested the concept of transforming the conventional forces into a kind of production oriented army. Third, one could also observe that there is inherited-organizational notion with regard to military business ventures. It was decided to establish the Sena Kalyan Sangstha influenced by a same model of army in Pakistan. Through such military established ventures, they intent to provide social services such as education, housing and medical treatments, pensions, social integration for the troops and their families.

It is to be noted that the Bangladesh military, though engages in business activities, never compromises its main duty to protect the country as there is no direct involvement of army men in the commercial enterprises. At the same time, particularly in the recent political scenarios, army never tries to hijack the democratic set up of the country. It keeps always an adherence to the civilian supremacy over military and civil military cooperation's. So, it is also not possible to eliminate military business out of the civil-military equation. In this environment, it is easy state that there is no military industrial complex and military business complex which poses threats the socio-economy and the democratic development of Bangladesh. To be precise, the nature of civil military relations seems balanced here again and the official business activities of the military are still on a moderate level.

Based on the preliminary assumptions and observations on the nature of civil military relations in Bangladesh, the study stated three main hypotheses in the very early chapter of the thesis. After analyzing all facts based on the theory framed and findings of the filed visit, now it is necessary to test and verify the credentials of those three hypotheses. The first hypothesis states that a polarized political spectrum and personal animosity between the leaders of the two main party blocks create political instability and provide military a platform to intervene in politics. The study has arrived to state the first hypothesis in this way as we have seen that in number of situations the military in Bangladesh stepped out of its conventional national protection duty and took the power over. At the same time, there were several occasions the military tried to expel the corrupt and greedy civilian leaders and attempted to purify the destabilized political system by keeping loyalty and adherence to constitutions.

The main contention behind this hypothesis lies in explaining BNP-Awami League politics and their development priorities. Most of the studies assumed that each ruling regimes in Bangladesh failed to vindicate any flagship welfare programmes and schemes for the commoners in the country. Everything has political color and a totally politicized regime never brings out anything good for the society. Therefore, military in Bangladesh has become a tool to use by political parties and sometimes, the destabilized political situations make Bangladesh prone to military intervention. Secondly, it is hypothesized that the enormous pressure on various governments by military for more budgetary allocation and army's growing business interest have an adverse impact on the wider society and army itself. Though Bangladesh doesn't have that much threat

from external forces, the study questioned the constant rise in the budgetary allocation for military. The study found that instead of providing ample percentage of budgetary allocation for the welfare of general public, the alternative governments in Bangladesh continue to satisfy the military leaders of the country. Apart from that, Bangladesh military has established its commercial spaces by manipulating the civilian leaders. The military what was there in Bangladesh in 1971 had moved to a new position now. The enormous pressure groups have been pressuring the government to initiate policies and fund infavour of military. It was carefully studied here and civil military equation or civilian supremacy over military suggested. Third hypothesis state that an alternation of military and military-dominated civilian regimes has direct bearing on civil military relations and affects the consolidating process of democracy in Bangladesh. While testing the third hypothesis, the study made an enquiry to know the level of vulnerability of Bangladesh political system to military intervention. It is found that inch to inch every aspect's of the political institutions over politicized and civilian leaders are not in position to control military. It is proved that the trivial and complicated civil military relations in the early years of Bangladesh have direct negative bearing on the process of consolidating democracy in Bangladesh.

This study, as the title suggest, elucidated the continuities and changes in civil military relations f Bangladesh by examining its history, legacy and nature. It found that there were number of occasion's civilian political system in Bangladesh unable to respond to the needs of people and it provoked the military to intervene into politics. There were occasion's military leader's attempts to come over the civilian political system. Both tendencies reveal the fact that civil military relations in Bangladesh have been characterized by imbalances or lack of co-operations between civilian and military wings of the state. The four trajectory suggested in the study to measure understand and analyse the nature of civil military relations proven the fact that triviality dominates CMR in Bangladesh. It is not substantially established or democratic norms hardly followed. Though there are number of constitutional procedure to maintain proper civil military relations in Bangladesh, either politicized civilian system or politicized military spoil it. Therefore, the questions of civil military cooperation or equation hardly come out in the surface as solution. But the study findings suggest that there is the need of strong adherence from civilian and military leaders to strictly follow constitutional obligation to maintain balanced civil

military relations in Bangladesh. It is also suggested that civilian leaders should not be directed by their narrow political motives and military leaders should not cross constitutional lines and they should not involve in politics. To be precise, civilian system must be totally responsive to the needs and demands of people and military must be apolitical. Moreover, in order to create balance in civil military relations, people should have deliberate participation in democracy which eventually makes both civilian and military system to be sincere and responsive.

## *APPENDIX 1*

### **Questionnaire**

#### **Civil-Military Relations in Bangladesh (1971-2012): Continuity and Change**

##### **Interview Schedule**

Interview Schedule for Professors/Experts/Military Personnel/Politicians and Bureaucrats

##### **Details of the Respondents**

Name :

Designation :

Institution :

Contacts- email:

Mob:

##### **SET I**

1. Do you think the General Ziaur Rahman's period after the 1975 coup ushered in a new period of military politics with limited administrative decentralization, continuous political support and legitimacy to unelected government?
2. During 1971-1975, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman began to take steps to bring the military and bureaucracy under political control. But reality of the system

was highly personalized, centralized and increasingly oppressive. Is it true?  
How do you look at this period's civil military relation?

3. After Mujibur Rahman's assassination, there was a period (1976-1981) of political chaos with military coup and counter coups. Do you think the then destabilized political system had far reaching consequences on present days civil military relations in Bangladesh?
4. In 1977, with the Constitutional Amendment Order, Ziaur Rahman removed secularism and replaced it with a commitment to the values of Islam. It had adversely affected the four principles-secularism, nationalism, socialism and democracy-of first Bangladesh government. Was that move made Bangladesh a state vulnerable to military coups?
5. General Ziaur Rahman's regime was essentially a restoration of bureaucratic and military state. How do you look at the balance and level of civil military relations these times?
6. During General H. M. Ershad's period, one could observe his attempts to consolidate power through the opening of new lines of patronage that build support across key areas of the military and the bureaucracy. But what were the realities at the vindication level?
7. The first Khaleda Zia BNP government (1991-1996) had marked with cycle of military coups, martial law, civilian military rule, mass movement and systemic collapse. Had it done any contribution or damage to civil military relations in the country?
8. The Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment was enacted in March 1996 and it called for a non party government. Do you this formalized caretaker government system was a good sign for the well running of the state?
9. Sheikh Hasina's Awamy League government (1996-2001) had witnessed attempts to military coups and initiatives to maintain a better civil military



system. How do you observe civil military relations this period? (hint: under the Chief of Army staff Gen. Abu Saleh Mohammed Nasim, military was highly politicized and factionalized).

10. How do you look at civil military balance and imbalance in the context of inclusion of religious political parties in the ruling alliance, new military units, formation of Rapid Action Battalion, Operation Clear Heart during Kaleda Zia's second term (2001-2006)?
11. How do you response to the statement-The confrontational and dysfunctional party politics in Bangladesh led to the formation of military backed caretaker government in 2007-2008?
12. Since 2009 and after Shahbagh protest, do you think any improvements in country's governance, functioning of political institutions/civil military relations?

## **SET II**

13. How do you look at CMR in Bangladesh in the last four decades?
14. What are the major constitutional and legal provisions and enactments brought out by various governments in Bangladesh to enrich the concepts democracy, secularism and socialism?
15. Is there any civil-military imbalance in Bangladesh?
16. If yes, what are the major causes of such imbalances-religious, political or legal?
17. Do you think Bangladesh stands vulnerable to military coup and political instability?
18. Which is the suitable form of government in Bangladesh (military or civilian)?

19. How do you consider the development of political institutions in the transformation of present civil military relations?
20. What are the relevant theoretical discourses on civil military relations, especially in the context of Bangladesh?
21. What were the major phases and evolution of civil military relations in Bangladesh?
22. How did the social composition influence civil military relations?
23. What are the levels of institutionalization of military and civilian political procedures?
24. What were the levels of exerting pressure on government by military for more budgetary allocations?
25. How did the political orientation of military, group politics and factionalism hamper balanced civil military relations?
26. How does a balanced civil-military relations help to consolidate a vibrant democracy in Bangladesh?

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