

**BANGLADESH KRISHAK SRAMIK AWAMI  
LEAGUE: A POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

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(HASHEMI MASOOD JAMIL)

### Preface

Urgent search for stability and progress and other circumstantial reasons led the elite of the newly independent countries in the post-second world era to adopt the westminster type of parliamentary democracy. After independence the nationalist leaders of Asia and Africa inspired by liberal democratic values and institutions opted for parliamentary forms of governments, free press and judiciary, competitive party systems and direct election based on universal suffrage. But sooner or later in many countries this model was either rejected or underwent significant changes. In some cases the nationalist leaders themselves rejected it, in others the national political leaders were replaced by civil-military-bureaucratic elite with consequent changes in the system.

Generally, parliamentary democracy and free elections have not helped the decolonised nations to achieve social justice. In most cases parliaments have been dominated by major power groups in society. Consequently, radical reform measures have been blocked by various powerful interest groups in parliaments. The ruling elites invariably have to depend on these power groups who could deliver the votes.

The immediate post-independence ruling parties in most cases being the leading movement parties of the freedom struggles, tend to be composed of and supported by various interest groups including both the strong and weaker sections. Consequently, it is the former which controls the government for the promotion of its own interest and the latter remains neglected as ever. This anomaly undoubtedly calls for alternative models which would be a more effective instrument for the promised and desired social changes.

In the mid 1970s the new state of Bangladesh also faced this dilemma and tried to develop an indigenous model through a single national party Presidential system with a grassroot level self contained administrative structure. The proposed system provided for: Presidential form of government with a single party which was to be associated at all levels of the proposed decentralised structure of administration. The scheme also provided for party membership from the military, the para-military and the police force. That is how the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) came into being.

The BAKSAL in which all sections of the people including the bureaucrats, technocrats, military and

the police were to be represented was to become an integral part of the administration. All other political parties were dissolved. Members of all political parties were given option to join the BAKSAL.

While introducing the constitutional changes Sheikh Mujibur Rahman pointedly referred to the limitations of the borrowed western model of government and argued that Bangladesh would have to devise her own model of politics and administration, which would ensure democracy of the exploited.

However, forces of reaction immediately set in. The anti-national elements in the disgruntled bureaucracy, the military (mainly repatriates) the political adventurers, the aspirant middle class took advantage of political weakness and inefficiency and exploited people's frustration due to economic misery and rampant corruption, and coalesced with a small group of ambitious military men. These elements organised a coup and killed the father of the nation, his family members and then his close associates also. Later the military intervention was legitimised in the Ayubian way which while in no way minimised the economic misery and political uncer-



tainty and instability in the country, threw to the wind the ideals and objectives for which the people of Bangladesh fought for years. This process, however did not go completely unchallenged. Committed freedom fighters kept the spirit of this experimental model alive. The revival of the BAKSAL by a large chunk of Bangladesh Awami League in 1983 just before the beginning of the anti-military regime movements in Bangladesh clearly indicated this trend.

The present study is an attempt to arrive at an understanding of the origin and formation of the BAKSAL and its consequences in the context of developments in Bangladesh. This study also analyses the nature of the party elites of BAKSAL and the type of development strategy they have been pursuing. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formed BAKSAL in 1975, but it worked only a few months. The main purpose of this study is to explore the tenets of the unfinished BAKSAL experiment: its aim, ideology, political strategy and the aftermath.

At the same time it is admitted that the present study is not an exhaustive one as it has been executed in partial fulfilment of the M.Phil course.

The present work is divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with the background of the independence movement and the liberation war, the constraints for desired goal of national reconstruction of Bangladesh through the initially available politico-economic institutions and ideological compulsions for an alternative. The next chapter deals with the formation and main features of the alternative system i.e. the single party (BAKSAL) Presidential system, the second revolution, aims and objectives of the BAKSAL package. The third chapter covers the constitution and organisational structure of the BAKSAL. In the fourth chapter, the strategy and tactics of the BAKSAL, its ideological basis, its decentralised administrative structure as instrument for development process, composition and by-elections held under the BAKSAL system have been brought out. The fifth chapter covers the effects of the proposed BAKSAL system in Bangladesh; reactionary conspiracies, assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and others, militrisation of the political system and armed protests by BAKSAL followers, formation of Jatiya Mukti Bahini (JMB) and finally revival of the BAKSAL as a political party in 1983. In the concluding chapter a brief summary of the

findings has been incorporated.

The Appendix contains details of members represented in various BAKSAL Committees. It is hoped that this list would provide useful inputs for those who wish to do further research on political elites and leaders in the Bangladeshi political system.

The work is mainly based on primary and secondary source materials. The primary source are both official and non-official. The non-official primary sources mainly comprise party documents, booklets, pamphlets, letters and interviews with some leading political personalities and other party literature. Contemporary newspapers and weeklies form another important source of information. Secondary source include books and journals.

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List of Abbreviations

AL	Awami League
APAL	All Pakistan Awami League
APSAC	All Parties Student Action Committee
ALPP	Awami League Parliamentary Party
ABMCL	All Bengal Muslim Chhatra League
AJL	Awami Jubo League
Art.	Article
ADC	Additional Deputy Commissioner
BAKSAL	Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League
BDR	Bangladesh Rifles
BLF	Bangladesh Liberation Force
BCPL	Bangladesh Communist Party Leninbadi
BCP	Banglar Communist Party
BPML	Bengal Provincial Muslim League
BCL	Bangla Chhatra League
BSD	Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal
BDCL	Bangladesh Communist League
BCP(L)	Banglar Communist Party (Leninist)
BSS	Bangladesh Sangbad Sangshta
BPI	Bangladesh Press International
BJL	Bangladesh Jatiya League
CL	Chhatra League
CU	Chhatra Union

contd...../-

CPB	Communist party of Bangladesh
CS	Chhatra Sakti
CCCR	Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionary
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPI	Communist Party of India
CC	Central Committee
DC	District Committee
DCL	District Council
DFI	Defence Forces Intelligence
DUCSU	Dhaka University Central Student Union
EPAL	East Pakistan Awami League
EPCU	East Pakistan Chhatra Union
EPCL	East Pakistan Chhatra League
EPAML	East Pakistan Awami Muslim League
EPCP	East Pakistan Communist Party
EPCP (ML)	East Pakistan Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)
EPR	East Pakistan Rifles
EBR	East Bengal Regiment
EBCP	East Bengal Communist Party
EBWM	East Bengal Workers Movement
EP	East Pakistan
EBCP (ML)	East Bengal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)

contd...../-

EC	Executive Committee
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOJ	Gano Oikyo Jot
ICS	Islamic Chhatra Sangha
JKL	Jatiya Krishak League
JJL	Jatiya Jubo League
JML	Jatiya Mahila League
JCL	Jatiya Chhatra League
JRB	Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini
JeI	Jamaat-e-Islami
JSD	Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal
MP	Member of Parliament
MCA	Member of Constituent Assembly
ML	Muslim League
MA	Master of Arts
NAP	National Awami Party
NSF	National Student Federation
NeI	Nazam-e-Islam
NPL	National Progressive League
PDP	Pakistan Democratic Party
PDM	Pakistan Democratic Movement
POWS	Prisoners of War
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
PBSP	Purba Bangla Sarbohara Party
PRC	Primary Committee
RTC	Round Table Conference

contd...../-

RC	Regional Committee
SBCSP	Swadhin Bangladesh Chhatra Sangram Parishad
SEATO	South-East Asia Treaty Organisation
TC	Thana Committee
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
USA	United States of America
UF	United Front
UC	Union Committee
VP	Vice-President
VC	Vice-Chancellor

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## Chapter - I

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### GENSIS OF THE BANGLADESH KRISHAK SRAMIK AWAMI LEAGUE (BAKSAL): AN APPRAISAL

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#### Political Background of Bangladesh :

The People's Republic of Bangladesh came into being after a fierce battle was fought essentially between the oppressed people of Bangladesh (erstwhile East Pakistan) and their oppressors represented by the then Pakistan Army. Thus "the story of Bangladesh is the story of horror and tears, valour and selfless dedication to the cause of freedom. Beyond the atrocities of the Belsen concentration camps, the scale of dehumanization by Pakistan Army in Bangladesh has surpassed all terrors of the past."<sup>1</sup>

The nine-month long resistance and armed conflict were the final outcome of a long-drawn political movement for the fulfilment of a peoples demand for economic, political and socio-cultural

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1. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Information, In Quest of Freedom (Dhaka, n.d.), p. 1.

rights in erstwhile Pakistan's national life which had been denied to them since the inception of Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> "The centralised political system of Pakistan had failed to accommodate the aspirations of East Pakistan, geographically distant from the seat of power located in West Pakistan. East Pakistanis were exploited to protect the politico-economic aspirations of a cluster of interest groups located in the west which had no societal linkage with East Pakistan. This typically colonial scenario generated a set of conflicts between the oppressed and oppressors."<sup>3</sup> Naturally, over the troubled years there evolved a "spirit of a national liberation movement among the culturally homogeneous, economically

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2. In Quest, n.1, p. 2, Also see Tajuddin Ahmed's speech in Government of India, Bangladesh and Indo-Pak War; India Speaks at U.N. (New Delhi, 1972), p. 12.
  3. Shyamali Ghosh, East Pakistan Awami League 1958-1971, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (JNU, New Delhi, 1980), p.1, For further details regarding Pakistani political system and the economic origin of Bangladesh. See, Khalid Bin Sayeed, Pakistan The Formative Phase 1857-1947 (London, 1968), ibid, Political Systems of Pakistan (Boston, 1967); S.P. Varma and Virendra Narain (eds.) Pakistan Political System in Crisis: Emergence of Bangladesh (Jaipur, 1972), Chapter 1-9; Keith Griffin and Azizur Rahman Khan (eds.) Growth and Inequality in Pakistan (London, 1972); Kabir Uddin Ahmed, Break up of Pakistan: Background and Prospects of Bangladesh (London, 1972).

downtrodden and politically disenchanted East Pakistanis."<sup>4</sup> There is no doubt that, "the East Pakistan Awami League (EPAL) was the instrument which initiated and conducted this movement."<sup>5</sup> A leading leftist intellectual of Bangladesh has admitted that the "democratic struggle against national repression" on the people of Bangladesh by the representatives of the "feudal elements" of the then West Pakistan was led by the EPAL and that in the absence of any organised class movement the workers and peasants also joined the Awami League platform.<sup>6</sup> Further, the EPAL "very successfully performed [the] crucial task of mobilisation without creating immediate social tensions."<sup>7</sup>

However, beside the EPAL there were other political parties in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan). There were the two factions of the National Awami Party NAP(M) and NAP(B), the various factions of the Muslim League (ML), the outlawed Communist Party and

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4. Ghosh, n. 3, p. 11.

5. Ibid.

6. Badrudin Umar, Politics and Society in East Pakistan and Bangladesh, (Dhaka, 1973), p. 113.

7. Ghosh, n. 3, p. 512.

its factions and the politico-religious parties like the Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), the Nazam-e-Islam (NeI), etc. Political parties apart, the other political actors were the students who at times were the key factor in the politics of the province and thus influenced indirectly, yet significantly the national politics of Pakistan. In independent Bangladesh also they have continued to influence national politics.

The NAP once an all Pakistan party was formed in 1957 by the anti-Suhrawardy, anti-military alliance, pro-autonomy, pro-left factions of the EPAL and the pro-left leaders of West Pakistan under the leadership of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, the founder President of EPAL.<sup>8</sup> NAP became the umbrella party for members of the banned Communist Party and other left underground groups also. Following the split in the international communist

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8. On July 25, 1957, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, the Awami League leader of East Pakistan, broke away from the Awami League, in cooperation with the Ganatantri Dal and the Pakistan National Party of West Pakistan and formed a new party, the National Awami Party. For details see K.K. Aziz, Party Politics in Pakistan 1947-1958 (Islamabad, 1976), pp. 37, 111-114. Also see, M. Rashiduzzaman, "The National Awami Party of Pakistan-Leftist Parties in Crisis". Pacific Affairs, Vol. 43, 1970-71.

movement the underground Communist Party of East Pakistan and the NAP also underwent splits. Pro-Moscow and pro-Chinese factions and parties came into being. There were splits within splits in the pro and anti-Moscow factions also. Between the two, the pro-Moscow NAP (Musaffar) and the so called pro-Chinese NAP (Bhashani) the former was more or less an unofficial ally of the EPAL while the latter played a rather controversial role - at times opposing the mainstream of opposition in East Pakistan.<sup>9</sup>

Among the politico-religious parties were the orthodox JeI, the NeI, and the less orthodox Council Muslim League (ML-Council), the Convention Muslim League (ML Convention), the Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP) and alliances like the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). Most of these parties most of the time toed the politics of the central government of Pakistan<sup>10</sup> and they did not enjoy much support in East Bengal.<sup>11</sup>

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9. For details of these splits in the left in East Pakistan politics, see Talukder Maniruzzaman, The Bangladesh Revolution and its Aftermath (Dhaka, 1980), pp. 35-43.

10. The JeI, however, had adopted anti-government stance once and was penalised by being banned.

11. For details regarding these parties see Aziz

In the present area of Bangladesh active student participation in politics immediately before and particularly since the inception of Pakistan has been phenomenal compared to their role in other parts of South Asia during the same period of time.

In East Bengal the students wing of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League (BPML) had formed itself into East Pakistan Muslim Chhatra League which in course of time became the East Pakistan Chhatra League (EPCL) and operated as the unofficial student wing of the EPAL.<sup>12</sup>

The East Pakistan Chhatra Union (EPCU) was the combined student wing of the NAP and the underground Communists till the splits in the principal parties resulted in splits in the EPCU also. Besides EPCL and EPCU the other students organizations were the Islamic Chhatra Sangha (ICS) aligned to the JUI, the Chhatra sakti (CS) and later the National Student

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cont...

n. 8, pp. 69-178. Also see Kalim Bahadur, Jamaat-i-Islami of Pakistan: Political Action (New Delhi, 1977); also see Mushtaq Ahmed, Government and Politics in Pakistan (Karachi, 1963), Second edition.

12. East Pakistan Chhatra League was formed on the initiative of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, then a promising and active young leader of the BPML and a close follower of H.S. Suhrawardy on 4 January 1948.

Federation (NSF) sponsored by the Ayub Government to counterbalance the student organizations in the opposition.<sup>13</sup>

Role of the EPAL and Other Parties before Liberation :

The dominant political force in Bangladesh was represented by the EPAL. Established in 1949 by the dissident members of the BPML as the East Pakistan Awami Muslim League<sup>14</sup> it dropped the word "Muslim" from its nomenclature in 1955.<sup>15</sup> The EPAL, a liberal democratic secular, middle class dominated platform party patronised by the surplus farmers, small traders and entrepreneurs, and the lower echelons of bureaucracy, drew considerable support from factory workers and other working class people, and the school, college and university students. The latter were organised and served as important links between the

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13. For details see Maniruzzaman, n. 9, pp. 52-68.

14. The first Executive Committee of the EPAML included: Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani (President), Ataur Rahman Khan, Abdus Salam Khan, Abul Mansur Ahmed (Vice-Presidents), Shamsul Haq (Gen. Secy.), Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Rafiqul Ahsan, Khondokar Mushtaq Ahmed (Jt. Secretary). For details regarding the formation of the party see Badruddin Umar, Furba Bangla Bhasha Andolan O Tatkalin Rajneshi (Bengali), Vol. 1 and 2 (Dhaka, 1976) Kamruddin Ahmad, Banglar Madhyabitter Itihas (Bengali), Vol. 1 (Dhaka 1382 Bengali Year) and Vol. 2 (Dhaka).

15. Ghosh, n. 3, p. 24.

small urban and large rural sectors of the East Bengali population. Notwithstanding its heterogeneous composition, since its inception the EPAL had favoured state intervention for undoing the ill effects of the wholly private capitalist system and sought for a welfare state. Since the 1960s it had stood for gradual transition towards a socialistic economy and a non-aligned foreign policy. According to Prof. Nurul Islam, an eminent developmental economist and the first Deputy Chairman of the Bangladesh Planning Commission, the AI because of the composition of various groups supporting it, represented what some like professor Kalecki had called "the intermediate regime."<sup>16</sup> Whatever be its composition and character the "platform party" spirit of the EPAL enabled it to become the most representative party of the province.<sup>17</sup> Therefore the six point formula<sup>18</sup> of

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16. Nurul Islam, Development Planning in Bangladesh: A Study in Political Economy (Dhaka, 1979), p. 22.
17. It should be noted here that officially the EPAL was a provincial wing of the All Pakistan Awami League (APAL) - although throughout its existence (upto March 1971) the EPAL and APAL did not have even a common manifesto.
18. For details of the six point see, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, 6-point Formula - Our Right to live, a Booklet (AL, Dhaka, 1966) see S.K. Chakrabarti, The Evolution of Politics in Bangladesh 1947-1978 (New Delhi, 1978), pp. 135-144. Also see Moudud Ahmed, Bangladesh Constitutional Quest for Autonomy 1950-1971 (Dhaka, 1979), pp. 87-98.



the EPAL took East Bengal's aspirations to a new high and the autonomy movement that followed the announcement of the formula became instantly popular.<sup>19</sup>

During the autonomy movement the main political forces in Bangladesh were divided into three camps : The "staunch autonomists" consisted of the bulk of the EPAL, NAP (M), Communist Party (pro-Moscow). "For them, the question of full-fledged autonomy for the region.... was as important as the establishment of parliamentary democracy in the country [erstwhile Pakistan] as a whole."<sup>20</sup> The second camp of the "moderates" consisted of the ML (Council), JeI, NeI, the NDF faction of the All Pakistan Awami League (APAL) including a few EPAL old timers like Ataur Rahman Khan. "They formed the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) under the leadership of Nurul Amin [an old Muslim leaguer and Chief Minister of East Bengal in early 1950s -- during the days of the Language Movement]. These parties attached more importance to the establishment of a parliamentary system, which they believed would have

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19. For details see, "Autonomy Movement", Chapter VII in Ghosh, n. 3, pp. 259-309.

20. Ibid, p. 277.

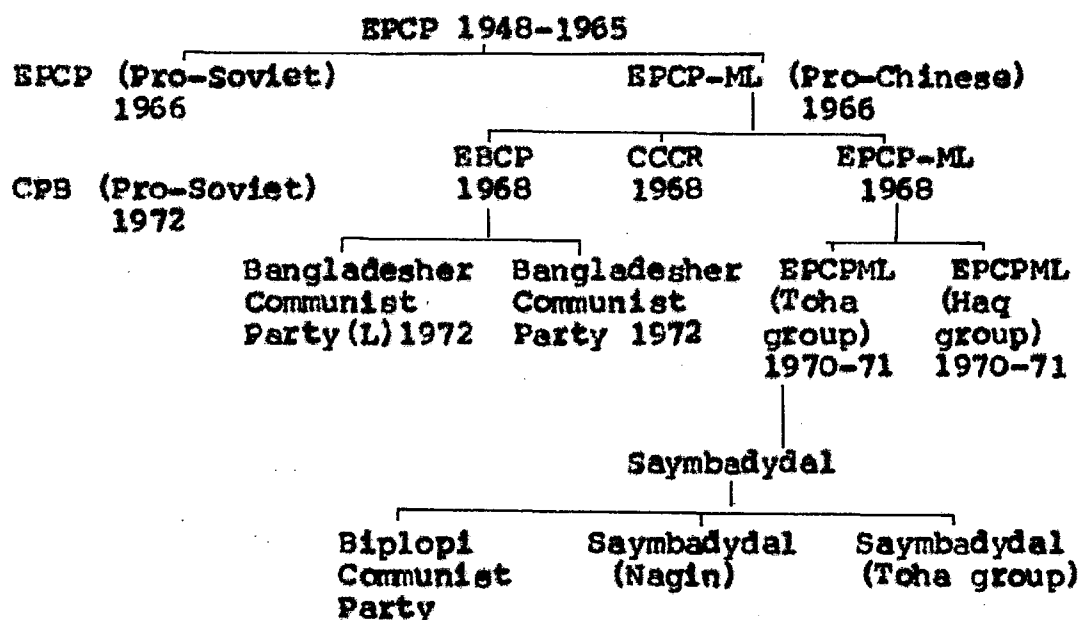
taken care of the issues behind the demand for autonomy."<sup>21</sup>

The third camp consisted of leftist parties and groups "under the umbrella of Maulana Bhashani" and they "seemed to believe in total societal restructuring which could not be achieved either through implementation of the six point formula or the realisation of the PDM objective. They also suspected that the autonomists were stooges of imperialist forces and represented merely the emerging East Bengali bourgeoisie."<sup>22</sup> But the left unity itself was under strains since 1964. "Differences emerged following the split of the international Communist movement as well as in relation to the foreign policy of the Pakistan government and internal political movement of East Bengal for full autonomy.... The pro-Chinese Communists finally left the EPCP [East Pakistan Communist Party] and formed the East Pakistan Communist Party Marxist-

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21. Ibid, p. 277. Actually Jamaat-e-Islami and Nezam-e-Islam did not believe in Parliamentary democracy. They believed in an Islamic state of Pakistan and Islamic system. PDM was formed on May 2, 1967 at Dhaka, see D.N. Banerjee, East Pakistan: A case study in Muslim Politics (New Delhi, 1969), pp. 156-57.
22. Ghosh, n. 3, pp. 277-78, also see Maniruzzaman, n. 9 and Umar n. 6.

Leninist (EPCP-ML) in 1966. [This] break was soon followed by splits in the Communist front organizations,<sup>23</sup> like the Student Union (EPCU) and the NAP. The EPCP-ML also had splits and different groups formed several communist parties. The continuous splits in the Communist movement in East Bengal are shown in diagram 1.1 It shows

Diagram 1.1  
Splits in East Bengal Communist<sup>24</sup> Movement 1948-1972



EPCP-ML = East Pakistan Communist Party Marxist-Leninist  
 EBCP = East Bengal Communist Party.  
 CCCR = Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries

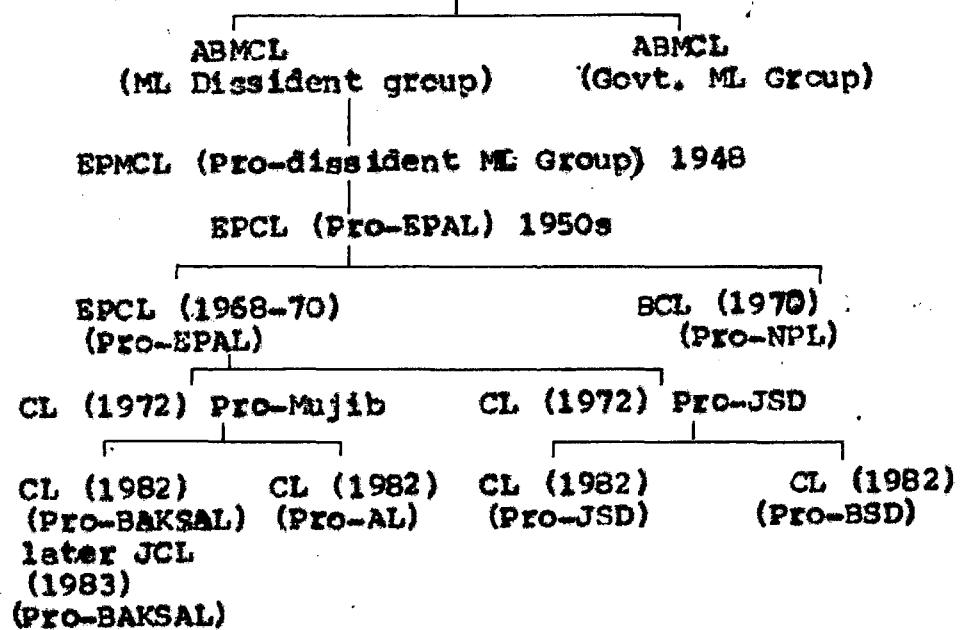
According to Talukder Maniruzzaman, n.9, pp. 38-39 East Bengal Workers Movement (EBWM) was formed by a faction of Pro-Chinese Communist Party. But EBWM was formed by Siraj Sikder in 1968 then belonging to the Chhatra Union (Menon group). Upto 1967 he was the Vice-President of this group So it was not a splinter group of any Communist Party, it was a faction of the Chhatra Union (Menon). But Chhatra Union (Menon) was a pro-Chinese faction aligned to NAP(B) and Pro-Chinese Communist Party.

23. Maniruzzaman, n.9, pp.38-39. Also see Abul Fazal Haq, Bangladesh Shasan Byabostha O'Rajneeti (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1974), pp. 255-285.
24. This diagram is based on Maniruzzaman, n.9, Haq, n.23, Some issues of Weekly Brichitra and present writer's personal interviews with some political leaders.

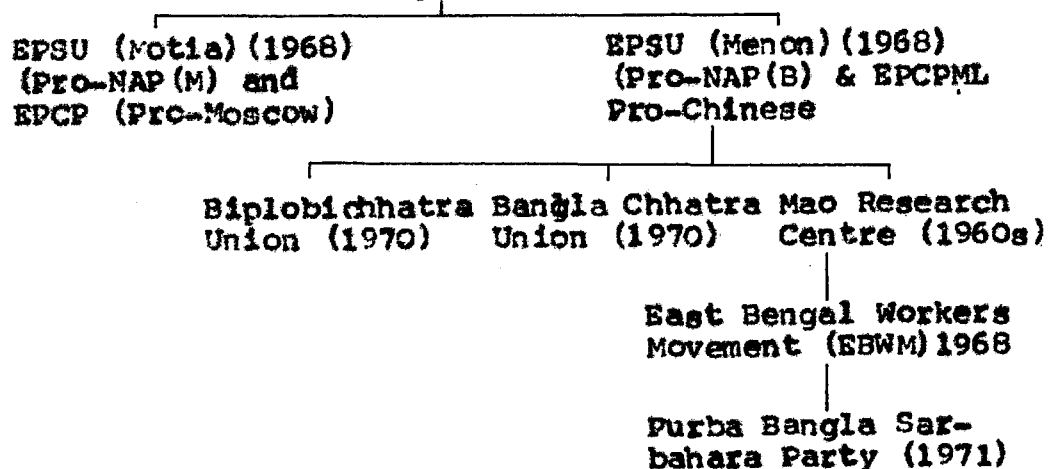
Diagram 1.2

Splits in Student Organizations<sup>25</sup>

(A) All Bengal Muslim Chhatra League (ABMCL) late 1940s.



(B) EPCU Splits (1952)



(C) Chhatra Sakti (CS) late 1950s (Independent, Pro-Tamuddin Majlis)

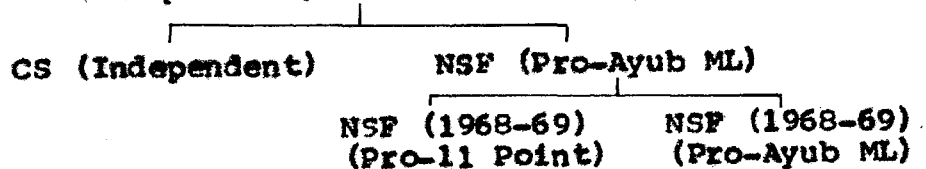
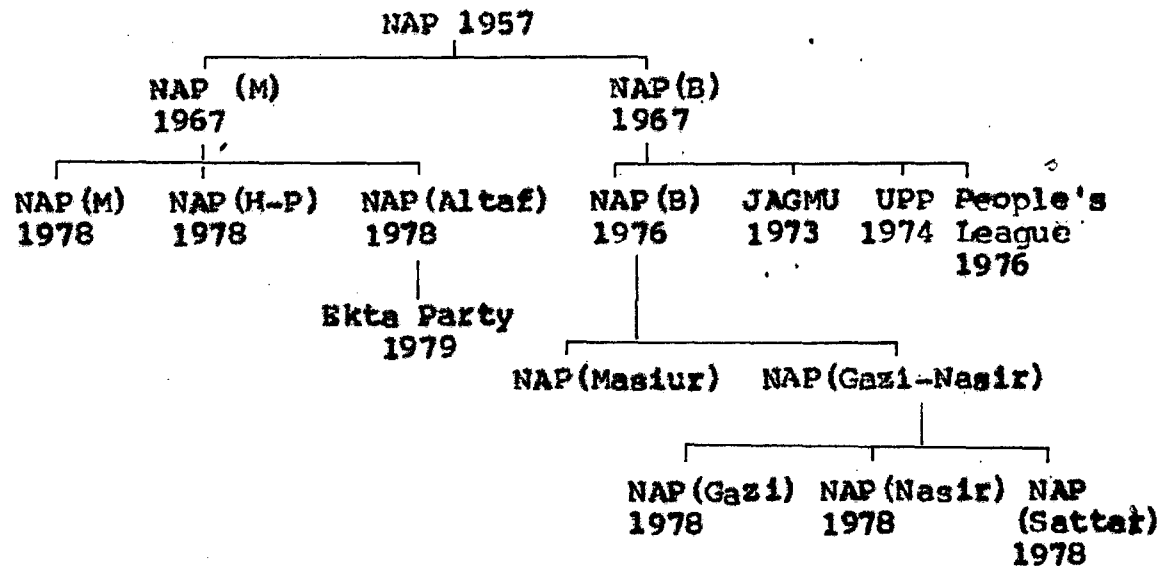


Diagram 1.3

National Awami Party (NAP) Splits<sup>26</sup>

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- BCL = Bangla Chhatra League  
 BSD = Bangladesh Samjtantric Dal  
 CL = Chhatra League  
 EPCL = East Pakistan Chhatra League  
 EPCU = East Pakistan Chhatra Union  
 EPMCL = East Pakistan Muslim Chhatra League  
 JAGMU = Jatiya Gano Mukti Union  
 JCL = Jatiya Chhatra League  
 NAP = National Awami Party  
 NPL = National Progressive League  
 NSF = National Student Federation  
 UPP = United People's Party  
 EBWM on 3rd June 1971 formed East Bengal Sarbahara Party under leadership of Young Engineer Seraj Sikder in Peyara Bagan of Sarupkathi (Barisal)

26. Ibid.

how the left movement, once strong in pockets of Bangladesh, was factionalised and individualised by the time Bangladesh became independent. Diagram 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 show splits in the communist party, students organizations and the NAP respectively which demonstrates a high degree of factionalism.

The students :

During the anti-Ayub movement<sup>27</sup> of 1968-69, in Bangladesh, it was the All Parties Student Action Committee (APSAC),<sup>28</sup> which gave the lead and unlike

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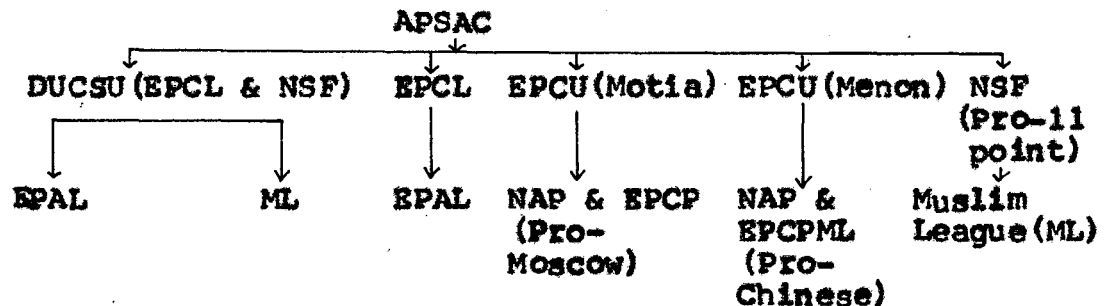
27. For details see, Ghosh, n.3, Chapter VIII, "The Anti-Ayub Movement", pp. 310-360, also see Rounaq Jahan, Pakistan Failure in National Integration (New York, 1972), pp.170-76.

28. Members of the All Parties Student Committee (APSAC):
- (1) Abdur Rauf, President, EPCL 1968-69.
  - (2) Khaled Md. Ali, General Secretary, EPCL 1968-69.
  - (3) Tofael Ahmed, Vice-President DUCSU(EPCL) An active freedom fighter, he was one of the organiser of the Mujib Bahini. At present organisation Secretary of AL.
  - (4) Nazim Kamran Chowdhury, General Secretary DUCSU(NSF). He became a minister in Gen. Ziaur Rahman's government.
  - (5) Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, EPCU(Motia) At present much persecuted Trade Union and CPB leader.
  - (6) Shamsuzzoha EPCU(Motia) At present CPB Leader.
  - (7) Jamal Haider, EPCU(Menon) At present United People's Party General Secretary.
  - (8) Mahboobullah, EPCU(Menon) At present teacher of Chittagong University.
  - (9) Mahbul Huj Dolan, NSF, at Present Janodal leader.
  - (10) Fakhrul Islam, NSF.

during the autonomy movement formed a common platform notwithstanding their difference of opinion on various political issues (See diagram 1.4 for their linkages with political parties). Besides provincial autonomy as stated in the six points,<sup>29</sup> eleven Point Charter demanded changes in the educational system, nationalisation of banking and insurance and big industries, reduction of tax burdens on farmers, better wages for workers, withdrawal from SEATO, CENTO and Defence Pacts with the U.S.A.

Diagram 1.4

APSAC Composition with their linkages with Political Parties



The aims and objectives of the student activists at that time - can be gauged from what the APSAC leaders had said in an interview :

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29. APSAC formally announced the Eleven Point Charter on January 17, 1969. See Text of Eleven Point in A.M.A. Muhith, Bangladesh Emergence of Nation (Dhaka, 1978), pp. 145-46. For some discussion see Ghosh, n.3, pp. 324-333. Also see Ahmed, n. 28, pp. 136-37.

We want a structural change of the administrative system -- not just a change of government... we will oppose any government which is anti-Eleven Points... our movement will not stop till we are able to uproot this government and establish a full fledged democratic system ensuring complete autonomy for East Bengal, effecting a complete rout of the vestiges of imperialism, feudalism and monopoly capital, solving the manifold problems of students, workers, peasants, jobholders and small and medium size industrialists.<sup>30</sup>

The participant student organisation having different ideological leanings aims and objectives of the APSAC revealed certain ambiguities and the pre-dominance of the EPCL in APSAC had a moderating effect on the APSAC programme.<sup>31</sup> However, EPCL itself was not a homogeneous organization. As Prof. Rehman Sobhan writes -

There was a definite tendency within the party represented by the students and workers wing of the party (the AL). The students league certainly had a strong, perhaps dominant, group who thought of themselves as socialists and some even accepted a Marxist perspective. This radical group constituted the spearhead of the party and gave the

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30. Interview in Bengali published in the Full page account of APSAC in daily Azad (Dhaka) 6 February, 1969, Cited in Ghosh, n.3, p. 329.

31. Ghosh, n.3, pp. 329-30.



party its militant edge. It had already made inroads into the labour movement and alongwith some working class union leaders had brought a militant working class ~~movement~~ ~~into the party~~ ~~to reinforce the militancy of the student wing.~~ faction into the party to reinforce the militancy of the student wing. This group had a very close bilateral line with Mujib who knew that in any confrontation with the military it would be the students and workers who would again lead and sustain the mass movement. The real pressure on Mujib to take up uncompromising positions against the [pak] army and to openly embrace radical postures came from this significant element in his party.<sup>32</sup>

In the 1960s some of the EPCL, leaders like Serajul Alam Khan (former General Secretary of EPCL), A.S.M. Abdur Rab, (Vice-President of DUCSU 1971 who later became General Secretary of the JSD), Shajahan Siraj (General Secretary, EPCL in 1971 who later became Joint Secretary of JSD), Swapan Kumar Choudhury (Organising Secretary EPCL, 1970 later joined liberation fight and killed by Pakistani Army) thought themselves socialists. There were two different lines of thinking within the Chhatra League -- "The one was a believer in the ideas of Sheikh and

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32. Rehman Sobhan, "Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the contradictions of Bourgeois Society in Bangladesh" in Abdul Gaffar Choudhury (ed.), Sheikh Mujib: A Commemorative Anthology (Radical Asia Books, London, 1977) Quoted in Footnote 29, Lawrence, Lifschutz, Bangladesh the Unfinished Revolution (London, 1979), pp. 72-73.

the principles of the AL. This group was represented, among others, by Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni, Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed, Noor-e-Alam Siddiqui and Sheikh Shahidul Islam. The more radical group was, however, represented by ASM Abdur Rab, Sahajahan, Shiraj, Swapan Kumar Choudhury, Monixul Islam Moni and Serajul Alam Khan".<sup>33</sup> Swapan Kumar Choudhury introduced a resolution for a Swadhin Samajtantrik Bangladesh (Independent Socialist Bangladesh) at an extended meeting of the central committee of the EPCL as early as on August 12th, 1970.

Anyway, differences among political parties and student organisations notwithstanding, their short term coalitional approach strengthened the anti-Ayub movement till President Ayub Khan himself ended his rule. And it also helped the staunch autonomists, particularly the EPAL at that particular stage to popularise the demand for autonomy. But while doing so, the long term demands of eleven pointers also caught popular imagination. Quite evidently the EPAL leadership had taken note of the potentials of student

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33. Md. Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Emergence of Bangladesh and Role of Awami League (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 167-68.

force. Sheikh Mujib in his speech at the Round Table Conference (RTC), repeatedly referred to the Eleven Points as the "long terms goals" of the autonomists and acknowledged the need for radical economic reorganisation.<sup>34</sup> "Thus, reassuring the youth of East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujib said that implementation of the six point programme was not an end in itself, but was to serve as the groundwork for far greater changes demanded by them."<sup>35</sup>

#### 1970 General Elections :

In the election manifesto and throughout the campaign it was made clear by the principal political party that is, EPAL, that structural changes in the

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34. For details see, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's speech at Round Table Conference, Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Bangladesh Documents, Vol. 1, (New Delhi, 1971), pp. 33-38.
35. Ghosh, n.3, pp. 349-50. Also see Special interview with Abdur Razzak in Bengali weekly Khabor (Dhaka) 10 August 1980. Abdur Razzak said, "In 1966 when Bangobandhu announced the 6-point, as the General Secretary of the Chhatra League I went to him with the President of the Chhatra League (Syed Mazharul Haq Baqi) I asked him "Leader, are the 6-points all that you want?" In reply Bangobandhu with a faint smile said, "It is only a bridge for crossing over".

economy would be introduced gradually and through a system and processes developed indigenously and not borrowed from any other source. The EPAL manifesto said, "The basic aim of this economic programme is the creation of a just and egalitarian society free from exploitation" and it was "to bring about a revolution through the democratic process and thereby to replace the present structure of injustice by a new constitutional, political economic and social order in which justice between region and region, and between man and man, shall prevail, that the manifesto of the party has been drawn up." It also outlined "a radical change in the system of land utilisation and creation of new institutions in the form of multi-purpose cooperative." It stated, "A massive programme for the establishment of a network of multi-purpose cooperatives shall be accorded the highest priority" and "there shall immediately be established an organisational nucleus at each thana for this purpose."<sup>36</sup>

During the election campaign Sheikh Mujib promised: "We must attain full regional autonomy on the basis of the 6 point/11 point formula."<sup>37</sup> He said, "People

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36. For details see, Awami League Manifesto, in Bangladesh Documents, n. 34, pp. 66-82 (Emphasises added) How these programmes were incorporated in the BAKSAL package will be explained in chapter 2.

37. Morning News (Dhaka) November 27, 1970.

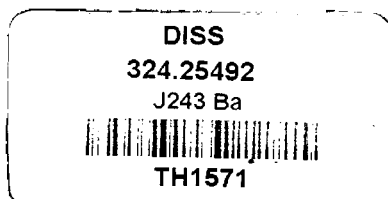
wanted independence in the real sense of the term but privileged classes enjoyed and exploited all these years the fruits of our independence."<sup>38</sup> The EPAL manifesto hereiterated promised that "a real living democracy shall be established in which people shall live in freedom and with dignity, and in which justice and equality shall prevail."<sup>39</sup> The manifesto also assured minorities the full rights of citizenship.<sup>40</sup> It projected a foreign policy which ran counter to that pursued by the ruling elite in Pakistan, it favoured, an independent, non-aligned foreign policy, peaceful co-existence with all countries, including the neighbours, complete support to the struggle of the oppressed people of the world against imperialism, colonialism and apartheid.<sup>41</sup> Immediately after the elections Sheikh Mujib declared, "My party, if it forms the government would introduce socialist economy in the country we would no longer allow the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer... land holdings upto 25 Bighas under an Awami League Government would

38. The People (Dhaka), November 15, 1970.

39. Maniruzzaman, n. 9, p. 27.

40. Ibid.

41. For details see, "Awami League Manifesto" in Bangladesh Document, n. 34, pp. 66-82.



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be exempted from taxes."<sup>42</sup>

The above discussion indicates clearly that the mainstreams of the anti-government movement in East Bengal throughout the sixties was a two-tier movement, which aimed at : (1) complete democratisation of the political system and (2) giving a socialist orientation to the economic structure. There were undercurrents however of both a more conservative and a more radical line of thinking. During the liberation war it was the more radical thinking that inspired a great many freedom fighters. At the Polls in December 1970 the EPAL platform swept 167 out of the 169 seats in the National Assembly that were allotted to East Pakistan. EPAL's 167 seats constituted an absolute majority in a chamber of 313. The massive victory of the AL created new hopes for the discontented East Pakistan. At the same time they apprehended that their rightful aspiration to free themselves from West Pakistan might again be frustrated through plots and conspiracies by the military junta and West Pakistani political leaders. How the hopes for a constitu-

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42. Sheikh Mujib's speech, January 3, 1971, in Ramendu Majumdar (ed.), Sheikh Mujibur Rahman - My Bangladesh (New Delhi, 1972), p. 37.

tional solution were frustrated and a reign of terror imposed is part of history now. To recapulate the main points that finally led to the liberation war: The military junta on the one hand kept postponing the inauguration of the National Assembly while on the other intensified military preparations to crush the Bangalees.<sup>43</sup>

#### The Liberation War :

With the military crackdown on 25-26 March 1971 the resistance movement started for which a broad direction had already been given by the Swadhin Bangladesh Chhatra Sangram Parishad (SBCSP) through its first bulletin, Bk number ishtehar (Bulletin no. 1) On 2nd March 1971 in a mammoth gathering at the Dhaka university Arts Building the SBCSP was formed under the leadership of Chhatra League and the Dhaka University Central Student Union (DUCSU).<sup>44</sup> The Chhatra League President Nur-e-Alam Siddique, General Secretary Sajahan Siraj, DUCSU Vice-President ASM Abdur Rab and General Secretary Abdul Quddus Makhani

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43. See, Rafiqul Islam, Bangladesher Swadhinata Sangram (Dhaka, 1981), pp. 120-177. See Zahir Rayhan, "Pakistan Thake Bangladesh", in Banqlar Bani, Special Bangladesh Ganchohatta issue (Dhaka, 1973), also see Md. Sajahan, "Swadhinata or Bangobandhu" in Weekly Khabor, 26 March 1981.

44. See Daily Ittefaq (Dhaka), 3 March 1971.

were the leading figures of the SBCSP. students and common men endearingly called them "Char Khalifa" Later all the four leaders joined the freedom fight and worked actively.<sup>45</sup>

The radical group of Chhatra League continued to pressurize Mujib to declare Bangladesh independent and to stop negotiations with Yahya Khan and West Pakistan's political leaders because this was thwarting the popular will to revolt. On March 2, 1971, at a mammoth rally at Dhaka University Arts Building

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45. After independence, A S M Abdur Rab and Sajahan Siraj formed the anti-Mujib JSD. Nur-e-Alam Siddique and Abdul Quddus Makhan continued with the pro-Mujib faction and in the 1973 elections both of them were elected MP. Nur-e-Alam Siddique is now General Secretary of AL (Ganotantry) i.e. the faction which broke away in 1978 when the AL was reconstituted. This faction led by the veteran politician and businessman Mijanur Rahman Choudhury denounced the BAKSAL formula as a 'mistake' and tried to be close to the Ziaur Rahman government albeit without much success. Mijanur Rahman Choudhury however, joined the "Janodal" in 1983 floated by General Ershad the self-styled President and Chief Martial Law Administrators of Bangladesh. Abdul Quddus Makhan is doing Business after his release from jail in 1979. He was arrested in 1975 after Sheikh Mujib's assassination.



A S M Abdur Rab, (VP-DUCSU) ceremonially burned the Pakistani flag and hoisted the Bangladesh national banner. In this meeting Nur-e-Alam Siddique, Abdul Quddus Makhan, Sajahan Siraj and Tofael Ahmed spoke in favour of independent Bangladesh. On 3 March at another mass meeting at the Paltan Maidan CL General Secretary Sajahan Siraj read out the SBCSP Ishtehar. Finally on March 7th the student leadership gave Sheikh Mujib an ultimatum: he must declare independence or they would abandon him and take an independent course.<sup>46</sup>

On 3rd March 1971 the Paltan Maidan at Dhaka witnessed a tumultuous crowd carrying bamboo sticks, symbolising their agonised protest against Pakistani military junta, attending a meeting called by the SBCSP to announce its the first directive for the Swadhikar (self rule) movement. "The Ishtehar proclaimed an independent and sovereign Bangladesh for the purpose of attaining three basic objectives, namely:

- (1) Full development of the language, literature and culture of Bangladesh by creating an upright and bold Bengali nation in the world.

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46. For details see, Islam, n. 43, pp. 135-170.

- (2) Complete eradication of regional and class distinction and establishment of socialistic economy and rule of peasants and workers;
- (3) Establishment of an unadulterated democracy with complete individual freedom particularly freedom of speech and the press.

The Ishtehar also laid down point by point the modalities (or strategy and tactics) for the ensuing struggle which included organisation of Swadhinata Sangram Parishad at the levels of village, mahalla, thana, sub-division, city and district and formation of Muktibahinis consisting of workers and peasants in the industrial and rural areas respectively.<sup>47</sup> The Bulletin was prepared under the direction of Sheikh Mujib by Serajul Alam Khan and Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moni.<sup>48</sup> What the Ishtehar meant was that the

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47. Ghosh, n.3, pp. 491-492. For the full text of the Ishtehar, see photocopy of Ibid., Bengali and its English translation, Appendix IX, pp. xiv-xvii.

48. Writer's interview with Abdur Razzak (Present General Secretary of BAKSAL, in March 1980 and January 1982 in Dhaka. Serajul Alam Khan was General Secretary of EPCL during 1963-65. During the liberation war in the "Mujib Bahini" training camp he gave a new line of direction for "prolonged war" and "socialist Bangladesh". After liberation he was the chief architect of the JSD but he did not take any key post like President or General Secretary of the JSD.

final objective of the struggle was establishment of a democratic and exploitation free society and that it required an ideologically oriented struggle. "What the Ishtehar clearly called for was a prolonged revolutionary armed struggle under the leadership of Sheik Mujibur Rahman."<sup>49</sup>

Then the Awami League launched a campaign of civil disobedience movement against the West Pakistani army rule. The campaign of non-cooperation, non-violent movement effectively transferred civilian authority to Sheikh Mujib. He declared at a mammoth public meeting held on 7 March 1971, "Today's struggle is the struggle for freedom, this struggle is the struggle for independence."<sup>50</sup> He called upon the

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cont..1

Later he inducted Army personnel in politics. Serajul Alam Khan remained behind the scene and was referred to as the "King maker". He was also key figure of the Bangladesh Communist League (BDCL) a underground Communist Party. Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni, nephew of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was General Secretary of the EPCL during 1960-63. During the liberation war he played an important role and along with Serajul Alam Khan and Abdur Razzak, was the chief architect of the "Mujib Bahini". Later Sheikh Moni contributed significantly towards the constitutional change leading to the formation of the BAKSAL. On 15 August the "Coup organisers" killed Sheikh Moni and his wife.

49. Ghosh, n. 3, p. 493.

50. See Sheikh Mujib's 7 March speech in The Bangladesh Observer, 8 March, 1971.

the people to turn every home into a fortress to use every weapon available to fight and resist the enemy soldiers.<sup>51</sup> By this time under the direction of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman everywhere in Bangladesh "Sangram Committees" has been formed under the Awami League leadership.

The members of the SBCSP in a joint statement urged upon the people to observe 23 March as Protirodh Dibag (Resistance Day). Accordingly, the Swadhin Bangladesh flag was hoisted on all public and private buildings of Dhaka and other cities. In Dhaka the main attraction of the day's programme was the March past by "Joy Bangla Bahini" (Army for the victory of Bengal).<sup>52</sup> On the same day angry crowds in Dhaka destroyed the Pakistani flag and pictures of Jinnah were defied.<sup>53</sup>

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51. For details see, Majumdar, n. 42.

52. "Joy Bangla Bahini" was formed by SBCSP on March 1971. The member of the "Joy Bangla Bahini" got training with dummy Rifles on Dhaka and other parts of Bangladesh. Most of the members came from Chhatra League and Chhatra Union.

53. See Government of Pakistan, White Paper on the Crisis in East Pakistan, (Islamabad, 1971).

Sheikh Mujib, before he was arrested on the night of 25 March (Kala Ratri) had sent a message declaring Bangladesh's war of independence to the EPR wireless base at Chittagong and to Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury (AL Labour Secretary).<sup>54</sup> From accounts given in different sources it seems that because of Zahur Ahmed's illness the declaration was read out by M.A. Hannan (General Secretary Chittagong District AL) from the Kalurghat transmitting station in Chittagong. Later it was repeated by Belal Ahmed and Abul Kashem Sandwipi.

Afterwards in order to draw the support of the Bangladesh in the army the local AL leaders, workers and students went to Major Ziaur Rahman and Persuaded him to proclaim independence. In the evening of 27 March he read out the declaration of independence for the third time from the Kalurghat Radio station.<sup>55</sup> "In his first broadcast on March 27, Major Ziaur Rahman announced himself as the Head of State of Independent Bangladesh. This declaration created great resentment among AL leaders and workers and

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54. Mustafa Sarwar, "10th January and onward March" in The Bangladesh Observer, January 10, 1974.

55. For details see, Bhuiyan, n. 33, pp. 186-87.

among students in Chittagong. In his second broadcast, Major Ziaur Rahman declared that he was proclaiming independence on behalf of Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of the nation.<sup>56</sup> Ziaur Rahman himself stated that he declared independence in the name of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and called for an armed struggle under Mujib's leadership.<sup>57</sup>

Subsequent to General Yahya's order to commit genocide on the peace-loving people of Bangladesh,<sup>58</sup> people responded to the Sheikh Mujib's call and they took up arms. Bengalee officers and jawans of the army stationed in this area, the Police, East Pakistan Rifles (EPR), East Bengal Regiment (EBR) and members of other para-military organisations defected and started fighting against the barbarous enemy. Students, workers, farmers, clerks, small businessmen and broadly speaking every able bodied Bengalee youth became a freedom fighter and joined the liberation war or the Mukti Juddha.

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56. Maniruzzaman, n. 9, footnote 30, pp. 105-106.

57. See Brichitra, Bengali Weekly, Independence Day Special Number, (Dhaka, 1974) referred in Ghosh, n. 3, p. 498.

58. Present writer with his friends Kamran Ahmed (now teacher of Dhaka University), Anwar Hossain Sinha, (now officer of Janata Bank), saw on 25-26 March (Kalo Ratri) a lot of peace loving innocent people being killed by Pak Army in Saderghat terminal, Sakhari Bazar, Jaganth College Taxi Stand, English Road, Naya Bazar (Dhaka).

The liberation war or the Mukti Juddha went through several distinct stages. Sporadic armed resistance began immediately after the crackdown. In the first phase the Joy Bangla Bahini was formed locally in different areas under the direction of the SBCSP. Further the local Sangram Committees organised by the Awami League with members from AL, NAP (M), NAP (B), EPCP (Monisingh) and others,<sup>59</sup> offered resistance with some 303 rifles procured from the local police and some crude molotov cocktail bombs. They were also joined by the Awami League Swachha Sebak Bahini (volunteer crops), EPR, EBR, the police and volunteer from the NAP and underground communist Party workers. Students who were not aligned with any political organisation also joined in large numbers.<sup>60</sup> Later on these local groups acquired names after their leaders. Thus there were the Kadir Bahini, Hamayet Bahini, Major Zia's group, Major

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59. "On 7 March 1971, in a meeting of the working committee of the party (AL), Sheikh again announced a week long programme from 8 March.... The programme also included the organization of a Sangram Parishad in each Union, mahalla, thana, sub-division and districts under the leadership of the local AL units". See Bhuiyan, n. 33, p. 168.

60. The writer himself, a college student at the time, joined the freedom fight at the earliest stage (25/26 March) and continued through the entire period of resistance and the final offensive and liberation -- as a freedom fighter. The following discussion on the liberation war is based on personal experience and interview with many other freedom fighters.

Khaled Mosharaff's group, Major Osman's group, Major Jalil groups and so on. Later they were helped by those who had formed the bulk of the coordinated Mukti Bahini and were trained and given arms outside Bangladesh.<sup>61</sup>

At a later stage within the Mukti Bahini another group which at first was called the Bangladesh Liberation Force (BLF) and then -re-named as the Mujib Bahini came into being. Its leadership consisted of the then hard core Chhatra Leaguers and Awami League leaders like Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni, Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed, Serajul Alam Khan, A S M Abdur Rab.<sup>62</sup>

Technically, the Mukti Bahini consisted of two separate elements fighting on the basis of: (i) only an integrated overall plan for the whole of Bangladesh and (ii) an integrated plan for each sector. "These two elements were (a) Niyomito Bahini - regulars of the three armed forces and (b) the Gano Bahini - guerrillas drawn from amongst students, farmers" and workers.<sup>63</sup>

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62. See Bengali weekly Muktir Bani (Dhaka) 16 Dec. 1979, also see Special interview with Abdur Razzak (now BAKSAL Secy.) and Shajahan Seraj (Acting Secy. JSD) in Bengali weekly Khabor (Dhaka) 10 August 1980.

61. Kadir Siddique, Swadhinata Ekattar, (Bengali), (Calcutta, forthcoming).

63. Bhuiyan, n. 33, p. 203.



In Mukti Bahini most of the members were young and they came from rural areas most of them being students and agricultural labourers. Politically most of them were AL supporters. Others were supporters of the NAP (M), NAP (B) the EPCP (later CPB) and many belonged to some groups of the EPCPML. Some also came from the traditionally Muslim leaguers' families. But majority of the freedom fighters had no political identity. Nevertheless they strongly believed that Bangladesh must be independent through arms struggle. Members of the EPR, EBR, police and other para-military forces that joined the Mukti-Bahini also lacked the characteristic of what is known as politically oriented "People's Army". Hence, although individually the freedom fighters were completely dedicated to the cause of liberation - their different ideological commitment kept the Mukti Bahini a heterogeneous assortment of dedicated soldiers fighting for a limited cause - the liberation.<sup>64</sup>

Another group of active supporters of the liberation movement were intellectuals who fled to India, the United Kingdom and the United States and

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64. Writer's Personal Assessment made during and after the liberation war.

other countries after 25th March. They also had sharp ideological differences but during the liberation struggle they were united in their fight against Pakistan army.<sup>65</sup>

It is true that people from all walks of life offered resistance with whatever they had and took up arms whenever they got the opportunity. Any indepth study regarding the composition of the Mukti-Bahini would substantiate this claim. It is also true that while resisting the Pak army all of them fought unitedly. But among the politically conscious and ideologically committed Mukti Juddhas there were considerable difference in the perception of the future shape of things in the state for which they were fighting. Those who believed in a socialistic society seemes to have dominated the scene.

Role of the Left Parties (pro-Chinese) during Liberation War :

During the liberation war the East Pakistan Communist Party (ML) had come out with the thesis that the conflict was a struggle between the "two boot-licking dogs of the American imperialists", EPCPML

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65. M. Rashiduzzaman, "Leadership, organization strategies and tactics of the Bangladesh Movement"; Asian Survey, Vol. XII, Number 3, March 1972.

leaders, therefore, considered both groups (Pakistan Army and AL dominated Mukti-Bahini) as enemies of the exploited people of Bangladesh and had urged their cadres to resist both groups. They also called on people to take up arms and form guerrilla squads against both the Pakistan army and the Mukti-Bahini. EPCPML leader Mhammad Toaha 'collected about 10,000' 'so-called red guerrillas', who came into head-on collision with Mukti Bahini and Mujib Bahini.<sup>66</sup> In an interview Col. Ashiq Hossain of the Pakistan army who was in command of the Noakhali sector during the liberation war told Lawrence Lifschultz in 1976 that he had negotiations with Toaha "for joint operation against the Mukti-Bahini guerrilla forces."<sup>67</sup> A faction of EPCPML led by Abdul Huq, "argued that the entire confrontation was the product of Indian expansionism backed by the Soviet Union with the sole intent of destroying the territorial integrity of Pakistan."<sup>68</sup>

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66. Maniruzzaman, n. 9, p. 144.

67. Lifschultz, n.32, p. 22, Toaha's home district is Noakhali and he collected most of his so-called red guerrilla from there.

68. Ibid, p. 22, After independence Abdul Huq and his group did not accept the reality of an independent Bangladesh and continued to call it East Pakistan and till 1975 called his faction of the Communist Party as East Pakistan Communist Party.

Several groups of pro-Chinese Communists who fled to India during the period of occupation formed the Bangladesh Mukti Sangram Samonnoy Committee (Coordination Committee for the Bangladesh Liberation Struggle). These included (1) EBCP led by Deben Sikder and Abul Basher, (2) EPCPML led by Anil Sen and Nazrul Islam, (3) CCCR, (4) Some independent Communists led by Dr. Maroof Hossain, Dr. Sayedur Dahar and Nasim Ali. The Samonnoy Committee accorded full support to the Bangladesh Government in Exile and its Mukti-Bahini. The EBCP leader Tipu Biswas, Ohidur Rahman fought against Pakistan's army in Pabna and Attrai (Rajshahi). They worked unitedly with the Mukti Bahini and fought against the national enemy, the Pakistani military.<sup>69</sup> The East Bengal workers Movement (EBWM) which had been transformed into the "Purbo Bangla Sarbochara Party" claimed to be a party of the proletariat under the leadership of Siraj Sikder supported the national war against Pakistani military but they did not accept the AL leadership. They formed their own liberation army with its headquarters at Peara Bagan near Barisal. They not only fought

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69. Maniruzzaman, n.9, pp. 146-147.

against Pakistani forces but also fought against the Mujib Bahini.<sup>70</sup>

At the (provisional) governmental level during the war a Consultative Committee consisting of four representative of the AL and one representative each of the two factions of the NAP, the CPB and the Bangladesh National Congress was formed in "Mujib Nagar" on September 8, 1971. The membership included Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Professor Muzaffar Ahmed, Moni Singh, Monoranjan Dhar, Khondkor Mushtaque Ahmed and Tajuddin Ahmed as the convenor. This was set up to advise the government on matters relating to the liberation struggle.<sup>71</sup> At the military level the strategy of the liberation war was laid down in a paper prepared by Major Safiullah, Major Khaled Musharraf and Colonel Osmani who had met earlier at Teliapara, a place in Sylhet district. This military paper called the Teliapara Document was approved by the provisional Bangladesh Government.<sup>72</sup>

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70. For details see Abu Zafar Mustafa Sadek, Boiplobik Preksha Pate Comred Siraj Sikder, (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1981).

71. Muhith, n. 29, p. 263. The installation ceremony of the Republic of Bangladesh was held in the mango-grove of Baidyanathatala in Meherpur sub-division of Kushtia district. Later this place was named "Mujib Nagar" and the exile Government called "Mujib Nagar government".

72. Maniruzzamin, n.9, pp.111-12. Gol. Osmani was appointed the Commander in chief of Mukti Bahini during the liberation war by Provisional Government.

The Collaborators :

Besides those mentioned earlier, who had opposed the freedom fighters on ideological grounds but not the freedom struggle as such, there were others who had opposed both and they are categorised as "collaborators".

Many rightist communalists, non Bengali Biharis, Jamaat-e-Islami members and anti-social elements were organised into groups like Razakars, Al-Shams, Al-Badars, etc., by the agents of the Pakistani Junta in Bangladesh to terrorise the freedom fighters by clandestinely helping the Pak Army. They used to operate mainly by organising the so-called "Peace Committees" which intimidated the pro-liberation people into giving information regarding the freedom fighters and also forced them to offer hospitality to Pak Army and give statements in favour of Pakistan. These collaborators were given considerable arms and ammunitions also so that they could kill freedom fighters and pro-liberation people at random. Mr. Ruhul Quddus, Secretary General of the Bangladesh provisional government stated on 21 December 1971, that about 140 doctors, engineers, professors, journalists, writers and lawyers were kidnapped and

killed in Dhaka on December 13-14 just two days before the victory by Al-Badar and Al-Sams.<sup>73</sup>

The Provisional Government :

In the Bangladesh Provisional Government there existed a number of factions. Tajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Provisional Government "was considered pro-Soviet and pro-Indian in the sense that he recognized the strategic necessity of such an alliance against Pakistan, given American backing of Yahya Khan." The Foreign Minister of the Provisional government Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed "had long been identified as the leading personality of the American lobby within the Awami League leadership." "Mustaque was Tajuddin's theoretical opposite." The United States did not open its negotiations with Tajuddin, "but opened secret contacts with Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed. Tajuddin and the rest of the leadership were

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73. "The Jamaat-i-Islami also took an active part in the Peace Committees which were organised by the army to help it suppress the revolt.... Prof. Ghulam Azam, the Amir of East Pakistan Jamaat remained throughout the period in Dhaka probably under Army Protection" to help the army. Al-Badars was an armed gang of person guided by Jamaat-i-Islami. Most of the Jamaat student Front member joined Al-Badar, who were trained by Pakistani government. For further details see Bahadur, n. 11, p. 134.

kept carefully in dark."<sup>74</sup> During the secret negotiations, Mushtaque's two most important proteges were his Foreign Secretary Mahbub Alam Chashi and a special assistant Taheruddin Thakur; the 'Mustaque Triangle', as this little group was known among Calcutta's "Bangladesh Watchers". "Eight secret contacts" took place in Calcutta and elsewhere between U.S. representatives and Bengali officials in 1971.<sup>75</sup> Most of the secret contacts were made exclusively with Khondokar Mushtaque. Lawrence Lifschultz interviewed Mushtaque in 1976. Mushtaque "confirmed the contacts that had taken place in Calcutta in 1971."<sup>76</sup> Mushtaque wanted to settle for a confederation with Pakistan through these secret contacts.<sup>77</sup> During this period his group published a leaflet entitled "Sheikh Mujib or Independence."

In the Tajuddin cabinet most of the members were lawyers and they were unable to understand logistic and military operations. So there were conflicts

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74. Lifschultz, n. 32, pp. 114-115. Also see Maniruzzaman, n. 9, pp. 110-111.

75. Lifschultz, n. 32, pp. 114-115.

76. For details Mushtaque interview with Lifschultz see ibid, pp. 115-116.

77. Sibdas Ghosh, Bangladesh Mukti Judha Prasanges (SUC West Bengal, Calcutta, September 1971), p. 12.



between military leaders and cabinet members. The young AL leadership consisting of student leaders like Sheikh Moni, Serajul Alam Khan etc., did not fully cooperate with the Tajuddin government. They formed "Mujib Bahini" to bypass the Tajuddin Cabinet.

#### Bangladesh Crisis and the Great Powers :

Soon after the military crackdown and genocide in East Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan was under some international pressure to stop the genocide and respond to the legitimate demands of Bangalees. India and the USSR directly helped Bangladesh government in exile. The government of India had expressed its "sympathy for and solidarity with the people of East Bengal in their struggle for a democratic way of life."<sup>78</sup> The USSR President Podgorny on April 2, 1971 in a message to Yahya Khan warned him that continuation of repressive measures and bloodshed in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) would undoubtedly make the solution of the problems more difficult and would do great harm to the vital interests of the entire people

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78. See Text of the Resolution moved by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the Indian Parliament on March 31, 1971 in Bangladesh Documents, n. 34, p. 672.

of Pakistan.<sup>79</sup> But the governments of the Peoples Republic of China and the USA proved by their action that they would go on helping Pakistan both economically and militarily for an indefinite period to "teach a lesson" to the USSR and India.<sup>80</sup>

From the beginning China emphasized that the entire question of East Pakistan was Pakistan's internal affair which did not warrant outside interference. Radio Peking repeatedly warned that India and the Soviet Union would attempt to intervene to cause the break up of Pakistan. The Chinese representative, Fu Hao, demanded in the UN General Assembly Humanitarian and Culture Committee, "the interference in Pakistan's internal affairs must be stopped first of all". China accused the freedom fighters in Bangladesh as "rebels" and "splitters" of Pakistan.<sup>81</sup> The USA government gave every assistance to Pakistan military dictatorship's attempt to crush the liberation movement of Bangladesh. Joseph Sisco, the US Assistant Secretary of State is on record to have asserted that "our

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79. Bhuyan, n. 33, p. 234.

80. For details, Tapan Das, Sino-Pak Collusion and US Policy (Bombay, 1972), p. 2.

81. Ibid, p. 151.

policy is to preserve the territorial integrity of Pakistan."<sup>82</sup> and at last on December 10, 1971, they sent the US nuclear ship "Enterprise" to the Bay of Bengal to try to prevent the final victory of the Bangalee people.<sup>83</sup>

Return of the Government and the Tasks Ahead :

Bangladesh was formally liberated from the clutches of the Pakistan occupation army with the latter's surrender to the Bangladesh-India Allied Forces on 16 December 1971. Members of the Provisional Government returned to Dhaka to take over charge on 22 December 1971. During intervening period the newly liberated country was in an administrative vacuum and that created considerable confusion. Dhaka was reported to be in a state of anarchy; the Indian troops and some honest freedom fighters were the only available elements for maintaining law and order.<sup>84</sup> Besides the unavoidable confusion, some dishonest and frivolent freedom fighters along with groups of "collaborators" and self-proclaimed freedom

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82. Ibid.

83. Mohammed Ayooob and K. Subrahmanyam, The Liberation War (New Delhi, 1972), p. 231.

84. Kessing's Contemporary Archive (London, 1972) p. 25109.

fighters indulged in anti-social activities. Possession of arms worsened the situation. Some collaborators and other opportunists posed as freedom fighters after 16 December 1971 and was known as the "16th Division."<sup>85</sup>

On his return from Pakistan prison Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared a few major decisions on 12 January 1972. He relinquished Presidentship (conferred on him in absentia) in favour of Justice Abu Sayeed Choudhury and himself assumed Prime Ministership and announced an eleven member cabinet.<sup>86</sup> This was extended and responsibilities re-allocated a few

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85. For details see Moudud Ahmed, Bangladesh: Era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Dhaka, 1983), pp. 41-43.

86. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister with Defence, Home Affairs, Information and Broadcasting, and Cabinet Affairs Portfolios; Tajuddin Ahmed Minister for Finance Planning and Revenue; Abdus Samad Azad, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Syed Nazrul Islam, Minister for Industries Trade and Commerce; Khondokar Mushtaq Ahmed, Minister for Power, Irrigation and Flood Control; Dr. Kamal Hossain, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Constitution Making and Works and Housing; M. Mansoor Ali, Minister for Communication; A.H.M. Kamruzzaman, Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation; Prof. Yusuf Ali, Minister for Education and Culture; Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Minister for Agriculture, Local Self Government, Rural Development and Cooperation; Phani Bhushan Majumdar, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies; Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury, Minister for Health, Labour, Social and Family Planning. The Bangladesh Observer, 12 January 1972.

a few days later.<sup>87</sup> Another important step was to order immediate surrender of arms by freedom fighters and others.<sup>88</sup> A constituent Assembly to draft the constitution of Bangladesh was set up with all the Bangladesh members elected in 1970 to the Pakistan National Assembly and the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly.<sup>89</sup>

In his first ever public speech in independent Bangladesh the "Bangobandhu" and "Father of the Nation" -- as he used to be fondly called - reiterated the promises made in the AL manifesto in 1970 to establish democracy and socialism in the land. He also referred to establishment of secularism and fostering of nationalism. All those were repeated in later speeches and welcomed by the people of Bangladesh.<sup>90</sup> Following these and in accordance with the AL promises made since the 1950s (and reiterated since then and

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87. On 19 January 1972 Mostafiz Rahman Siddiqui was appointed Minister for Commerce, Shamsul Haq as Minister for Labour and Housing, and Matiur Rahman as Minister for Rural Development and Co-operatives.

88. Sheikh Mujib ordered the Mukti Bahini on January 17, 1972 to hand over their arms to the authorities within ten days and gave warning that possession of arms after that date would be illegal. See Kessing, Vol. 18, 1971-72, p.25102.

89. For details see Haq, n. 23, p. 109

90. Asian Recorder (New Delhi, 1-7 January), pp. 10548-59.

particularly after 1969) wide ranging nationalisation laws were passed and land policy announced. On 25 March 1972, laws for nationalisation of jute, textile and sugar industries, major portion of foreign trade, and banking and insurance companies were passed and as a result 80 to 90 per cent of the country's entire industrial, banking and insurance business was brought under government control.<sup>91</sup> According to the new land policy announced on 14-15 August 1972 the AL government reduced the land ceiling to 100 bighas per family and allowed tax exemption upto 25 bighas.<sup>92</sup>

#### The Problems :

The Awami League government faced problems like: (1) Restoration of law and order, (2) handling of the freedom fighters and other political adventurers; (3) restoration of the war-damaged economy and towards that and negotiating for foreign aid, (4) Rehabilitating various categories of victims of the occupation and the war, (5) settling the P.O.W. issue with Pakistan. At another level, the AL leadership was troubled with intra-party feuds and factionalisms.

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91. Ahmed, n. 85, p. 19.

92. The new land policy P.O.-96 and P.O.-98 was announced on 14-15 August 1972. For details see weekly Bichitra, 19th May 1978, pp. 33-45. Also see Umar, n. 6, pp. 143-44.

Law and Order :

Bangladesh was almost an armoury with various types of people having listed and/or unlisted arms and ammunition of various kinds, crude as well as sophisticated. On the other hand, the law and order enforcing machinery was still disorganised. They were yet to be regrouped and reoriented under efficient Bangalee officers of whom there were not many.<sup>93</sup> In response to Bangobandhu's call large number of arms were surrendered by the members of the Mukti Bahini.<sup>94</sup> However, since the collaborators and the ultra left still retained their arms - a large number of freedom fighters and others including Awami Leaguers retained their arms as a means of self-defense.<sup>95</sup> The number of such collaborators is estimated at about 60,000.<sup>96</sup> Taking advantage of the situation the Islamic Fundamentalist Parties started communal and anti-Indian propaganda and talked about a "Muslim Bengal Movement."<sup>97</sup> Even the freedom fighters after having achieved their immediate and commonly agreed goal, that is, liberation,

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93. Ahmed, n. 85, p. 41.

94. Kessing, vol. 18, 1971-72, p. 25119.

95. Ahmed, n. 85, p. 43.

96. M.M. Islam, The Forgotten Thousands: Bengalis in Bangladesh Jail (London, 1973).

97. Text of the Sheikh Mujib's speech, The Bangladesh Observer, 30 March 1975. Holiday (Dhaka) 27 May, 3 June and 10 June 1973.

now disintegrated into factions talking about different courses for the future. Some professed scientific socialism, some believed in continuing class-struggle while a considerable number turned bandits committing crimes like robbery, extortion, killing, looting, grabbing property, sabotage, kidnapping, and so on.<sup>98</sup> As a result, the law and order situation continued to deteriorate.

#### Economic Problems :

The new state had no foreign exchange reserve, no food, no economic infra-structure as such. The scarcity ridden condition was aggravated by disrupted communication system and the old colonial administrative system with personnel groomed under the militarised Pakistani system who lacked any power of innovation. At a later date, Sheikh Mujib had said:

I got seven and half crore people of the country. There was no foreign exchange in banks, we had no gold reserve. We started the government of seven and half crore people with only papers... there was no army... there was no national government earlier, there was no defence, foreign affairs and planning departments here. In fact nothing existed here.<sup>99</sup>

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98. Ahmed, n. 85, p. 43.

99. Full text in The Bangladesh Observer, 30 March, 1975.



Apart from the immediate problems like resettlement of refugees and food scarcity, restoration of pre-war levels of export, prevention of frequent floods, revitalising the stagnant agriculture, generation of power supply and checking the fast rate of population growth needed to be attended to. With the physical infra-structure damaged it was an uphill task indeed.<sup>100</sup>

#### Factionalism in Politics :

It has been already explained that the Awami League which became the first ruling party of Bangladesh was essentially a platform party or a movement party. As such factionalism within the party was inevitable. If the party had come to power through purely constitutional and non-violent means perhaps factionalism could have been kept within limits at least for a considerable period of time. But the liberation war had created polarised political situation. The liberation war was perceived by a large chunk of both the active and not so active freedom fighters as a People's war in spirit at least, if not

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100. For details see Nurul Islam, "The State and Prospects of the Bangladesh Economy" in E.A.G. Robinson and Keith Griffin (eds.), The Economic Development of Bangladesh Within a Socialist Framework (London, 1974), pp. 3-4. Also see, Islam, n. 16, p. XI.

in form. They thought that victory in the war would lead to restructuring of the socio-economic edifice of Bangladesh and an exploitation free society would be established. The demands (from the erstwhile Pakistani regime) and promises (to the people of Bangladesh) made before the war by the Awami League and other parties like the two factions of the NAP, the underground communists, etc. had in fact already created a ground for the activists to expect that attainment of formal independence was just the beginning of the process of structural social change. And therefore it was only natural that the left of the centre elements in the AL and its student wing, the CL would demand a national government composed of all patriotic political parties and groups.<sup>101</sup>

However, the centrists and the right of the centre elements in the AL, successfully persuaded Bangabondhu to reject this demand. Hence, Bangladesh continued with the conventional post-colonial Westminster model of parliamentary democracy while statements were made for a socialist transition to pacify those who were dissatisfied with the state of affairs.

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101. For details, see, Maniruzzaman, n. 9.

In practical terms this negative decision caused a split in the Chhatra League - the backbone of the AL and the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) was formed by the dissident Chhatra Leaguers. Some of them were luminaries like Serajul Alam Khan, Shahjahan Siraj A.S.M. Abur Rab - who had become very prominent since the late 1960s. The JSD announced its commitment to "scientific socialism" and attracted those who were convinced by the ideological rhetoric. The JSD also received support from a section of the people that felt encouraged by its anti-India, anti-Soviet Union posture.<sup>102</sup>

#### The Constitution :

While practical politics were taking more complicated turns the constitution was in the making. A thirty four member Constitution Drafting Committee with Dr. Kamal Hossain as Chairman after having 78 meetings extended over 300 hours finalised the constitution and presented it to the Constituent Assembly with a note of dissent from six members of

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102 For details of JSD see Nazurul Islam, Jagholder Rajneeti: Ekti Bishleshan (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1981). Also see, "Major Jaliler Nutan Rajneeti" in weekly Bichitra, 27 January, 1980.

the Committee.<sup>103</sup> The AL Parliamentary Party accepted 80 amendments to the Draft Bill.<sup>104</sup>

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 4 November 1972 provided for a multiparty parliamentary democracy. It declared democracy, socialism, nationalism and secularism as the four basic principles of state policy. The special features were provisions for the supremacy of the legislature through Administrative Tribunals over the Judiciary, provision for acquisition of private property with or even without compensation, provision for the removal of any civil servant without assigning any reason and preventive measure against frequent defection by Parliament members and prohibition of use of religion for political purposes.<sup>105</sup>

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103. The Drafting Committee had only one non-AL member, Suranjit Sengupta then a member of the NAP(M). Who now leader of the Ekata Party. There was only one women member. The dissenting members of the Committee were Dr. Kheitesh Chandra Mandal, Hafiz Habibur Rahman, Asaduzzaman Khan, Mosharaff Hossain Akhand, Mutaqrim Choudhury (all AL members) and Suranjit Sengupta (NAP-M). For details see Haq, n. 23, pp. 87-108.

104. Ibid, pp. 99-100.

105. See the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Dhaka, 1972).

The constitution did not provoke much public controversy. But it was criticised in various quarters for various reasons, e.g., for adopting the 'Indian model', for imposing limitations on fundamental rights; for the non-justiceability of the socialist provisions. But even the staunch critics who advocated a more radical and explicitly socialist constitution like the JSD admitted that a "bad constitution was better than none."<sup>106</sup>

#### The Planning Commission :

The Planning Commission was set up in January 1972 with a view to entrust it with the task of realising the economic objectives as stated by the political leadership before and since independence, that was gradual establishment of socialist economy. However, the details of the socialist framework envisaged by the ruling party or the opposition was not spelt out very clearly. However, the unacceptability of the available socialist frameworks had been made clear by the Awami League. Naturally, what the Planning Commission provided was a mixed-economy

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106. Rounaq Jahan, Banladesh Politics: Problems and Issues (Dhaka, 1980), p. 67.

framework for the transitional stage.<sup>107</sup> Lack of resources and considerations for short-term returns made the planners depend heavily on foreign aid. The Planning Commission made no bones about admitting this. It also emphasised that transition to socialism could not be carried out without a political cadre to act as "watchdog" over administrators and others.<sup>108</sup>

### Elections 1973:

The first general election to the Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad was held on 7 March 1973. It has been rightly pointed out that the government was under no compulsion to hold fresh elections till 1975, but the leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman thought it fit to demonstrate the strong democratic basis of the new state.<sup>109</sup> Such prompt holding of election after a liberation war was also unprecedented.<sup>110</sup> On the eve of the elections Sheikh Mujib had said :

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107. Shyamali Ghosh, "Economic Planning in Bangladesh", Commerce Annual (Bombay, 1981), p. 151.
108. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, The First Five Year Plan.
109. I.N. Mukherji, "Constitutional Development in Bangladesh", Foreign Affairs Report (New Delhi) Vol. XXIV, no. 10, October 1975, p. 162.
110. Bangladesh Election Commission, Report on the First General Election to Parliament in Bangladesh 1973 (Dhaka, 1973), p. 1.

I do not believe that power comes from the barrel of guns. I believe that power lies in the hands of the people of Bangladesh. Bangobandhu will not stay a single day as the President or Prime Minister if people tell him to quit.<sup>111</sup>

Whether the AL was legally bound to hold fresh elections or not, it was morally obligated to offer the people a chance to use their franchise to choose between options offered by various political parties because the 1970 elections (the basis of AL acquiring power in 1971) were fought on the issue of autonomy and the context had changed since then.

With the religious parties immobilised<sup>112</sup> and even the various Muslim Leagues banned it was only the secular centrist and left of the centre parties that participated in the election. As such, the election manifestos of the well known parties differed only in degrees in their professed commitment to Bangladesh's future transition to socialism. The CPB, the NAP(M), the NAP(B)<sup>113</sup> and the JSD each promised a package of

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111. Full text of the Speech delivered at the Suhawardy Udyan, Dhaka on 26 March 1973, The Bangladesh Observer, 30 March 1973.
112. Consequent upon Article 38 of the Constitution religious parties did not exist at least openly. See Constitution, n. 105, p.13
113. NAP(B) was alleged to have forged an unofficial alliance with the pro-China Communist factions. See Communist Party Publication, Documents of the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (Dhaka, 1973), p. 60.

socialism. While the CPB, the NAP(M) and the NAP(B) like the AL accepted parliamentary democracy as the vehicle for such transition, the JSD pledged to "organise a revolution" to establish "scientific socialism". Interestingly, NAP(B), although it pledged equitable distribution of national wealth, favoured private ownership of industries except the basic and heavy industries so that a production oriented economy could generate national capital and thus pave the way for self-reliance.<sup>114</sup> The AL, compared to its earlier stand, seemed more committed to socialist transition.<sup>115</sup>

As it turned out the AL fought the 1973 elections as a referendum on "Mujibbad"<sup>116</sup> which in other words meant the four pillars of state policy as enshrined in the constitution.<sup>117</sup>

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114. Ahmed, n. 85, p. 139.

115. Ibid, and Mukherji, n.109, p. 162

116. The term "Mujibbad" was coined by the pro-Mujib faction of the Chhatra League (i.e. Siddiqui-Makhan group) in May 1972 when they in opposition to the other (Rab-Siraj) groups' rhetoric regarding "scientific socialism" upheld Mujib's four principles, viz., nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. Later the AL picked up the term and ventured to project it as some kind of a new ideal. For a discussion of "Mujibbad" see Khondkar, Mohammed Ilyas, Mujibbad (Dhaka, 1972). Ilyas has interpreted it as an ideology for socialism without bloodshed.

117. See Constitution, n. 105,



In the election campaign the AL, the NAP(M) and the CPB concentrated more on explaining their (rather similar) stand and programme regarding the country's domestic and foreign policies. On the other hand the rest of the parties, particularly, the NAP(B) and the JSD concentrated more on criticism of the government and vilification of the NAP(M) and the CPB. The government was criticised mainly on the following counts :

Failure to (1) restore law and order, (2) to check the price hike of essential commodities, to check smuggling (to India), blackmarketing, hoarding and other social evils, to check mismanagement and corruption in the administration of the nationalised sector and abandoned industries. The government was also accused of suppressing political opposition by undemocratic means and for turning the country into a client state of India.<sup>118</sup> These parties allegedly had links with the JāI and the ML elements and had carried out a concerted anti-India propaganda and incited communalism.<sup>119</sup>

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118. Ahmed, n. 85, pp. 139-40.

119. Communist Party of Bangladesh, n. 113, p.60.

In the elections the AL won a massive victory. The AL captured 282 of the 289 contested seats, JSD and Bangladesh Jatiya league gained one seat each and independent candidates secured five seats of the 3,38,96,777 registered votes in 289 contested constituencies 1,93,29,683 votes were polled. The total valid votes polled was 1,88,51,808 representing 55.62% of the total registered voters. The total invalid votes polled was 4,77,875 which accounted for 2.47% of the total votes cast.<sup>120</sup> A party wise break up of the votes polled is given in Table 1.1.

The 1973 elections were for the AL the means for seeking a final popular mandate to build the new state on the basis of the four fundamental principles, viz., nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. Because of Mujib's personal popularity, his vigorous campaigning and the AL's past record in leading the nationalist movement the party's victory was a foregone conclusion. A foreign journalist has been mentioned as saying, "Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would have won handsomely even if the elections had been conducted

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120. Report on the First General Election Commission, n. 110, pp. 52-53.

Table 1.1

A Party wise break up of the 1973 Election Votes<sup>121</sup>

Party	No. of candi- dates set up	No. of valid votes polled	%age of valid votes polled	No. of seats won
Bangladesh Awami League	289	1,37,93,717	73.20	282
National Awami Party (M)	224	15,69,299	8.33	-
National Awami Party (B)	169	10,02,777	5.32	-
Jatiya Samajtan- tric Dal	237	12,29,110	6.52	1
Communist Party of Bangladesh	4	47,211	0.25	-
Communist Party of Bangladesh (Leninist)	2	18,619	0.10	-
Banglar Communist Party	3	11,911	0.06	-
Bangladesh Jatiya League	8	62,354	0.33	1
Bangla Jatiya League	11	53,097	0.28	-
Sramik-Krisak Samajbadi Dal	3	38,421	0.20	-
Bangladesh Sramik Federation	3	17,271	0.09	-
Jatiya Ganotantri Dal	1	7,818	0.01	-
Bangla Chhatra Union	1	7,564	0.04	-
Bangladesh Jatiya Congress	3	3,761	0.02	-
Independent (in 96 constituencies)	120	9,89,884	5.25	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1078</b>	<b>1,88,51,808</b>		<b>289</b>

121. See *ibid.*, p. 53, Table 8.

by the United Nations and supervised by the Red Cross.<sup>122</sup> Still, unfair means was adopted in certain constituencies (e.g., Khondokar Mushtaq's Daudkandi in Comilla).

The 1973 manifesto had aroused strong expectations regarding transition to socialism which might have meant different things to different sections of the people. For the toiling masses it must have meant a better life condition which they had been seeking since a long time under different regimes. For those politically and socially conscious but ideologically neutral it probably meant somewhat better distributive justice, while the ideologically committed/ oriented ones it meant restructuring of society with a thorough change in production relations, etc. But the composition of the Jatiya Sangshad as elected in 1973 was more or less the same as that of the Constituent Assembly,<sup>123</sup> which again consisted of members

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122. Cited in Maniruzzaman, n. 9, p. 157. The opposition was aware of AL's overwhelming popularity and tried to neutralise it by any means, e.g. JSD even fought a case in the High Court to capture the AL symbol of Boat- which had been the AL symbol since its inception. See Reports on the First General Election Commission, n. 110, pp. 20-24.

123. For details regarding Jatiya Sangsad Composition see, Rounak Jahan, "Members of Parliament in Bangladesh", Legislative Studies Quarterly, August, 1976, p. 361.

elected in the Pakistan General Election 1970 which was held under different circumstances and for a different purpose altogether.

Famine of 1974 :

The economic situation further worsened because prices of all imports increased in the international market between 1972-74. In 1972 in Bangladesh there was a short-fall in winter-rice crop due to a draught. In 1973 December a severe cyclone affected large part of the coastal belt causing an estimated damage of 951 million takas.

Above all, besides corruption, the functionaries of the government who were experienced only in colonial subordinated provincial administration, completely lacked the broader perspective that is essential to run a national government. This inefficiency was very clearly reflected in the management of the 1974 famine.<sup>124</sup> The government failed to predict the crisis and so it was "unprepared".

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124. The following review of the 1974 famine is based on a full fledged study of the same in Mohiuddin Alamgir, Famine in South Asia: Political Economy of Mass Starvation (Massachusetts, 1980), Ch. 4, pp. 101 and Ch. 9, pp. 383-404.

Even after realising and belated admission of the fact that there was a famine condition the government failed to build up a stock from domestic and/or foreign sources. As far as the domestic sources were concerned the scarcity of foodgrains were more due to unavailability than underproduction in that particular year. "The domestic procurment operation in early 1974 was a dismal failure."<sup>125</sup> As for the foreign sources: the 1973 import plan had proved inadequate because it was based on an optimistic output projection that did not materialise. Moreover, "The government's ability to procure foodgrains from abroad was limited by a foreign exchange shortage, the abnormally high price of rice in the international market, an inability to obtain short-term credit, the non-cooperation of the international community and particularly hostile attitude of the U.S. government, which delayed food shipment and forced Bangladesh to suspend jute export to Cuba."<sup>126</sup> However, while it seems that international community, particularly the

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125. Ibid, pp. 388-89

126. Ibid, The American embargo was the outcome of the U.S. doctrine of "food as power". Also see, Harold G. Halcrow, Food Policy for America (New York, 1977).

United States, was unwilling in 1974 to bail the government of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman out of the crisis, the government functionaries themselves showed little sensibility to the impending tragedy, even though ominous signs could be seen everywhere long before the actual tragedy.<sup>127</sup>

Hence, the famine while taking toll of human lives also eroded the governments credibility to a very large extent. According to various available indicators it was the existing rural notables that further strengthened their economic (and consequently socio-political) power after the famine and thus semi-feudal production relation got further entrenched in Bangladesh. The famine also had its usual effects like migration, uprooting and seperation of families, higher rate of crime, etc. Particularly significant was the crime rate which after a decline in 1973 again showed an upward trend in 1974.<sup>128</sup> All these certainly heightened social tension and contributed towards the fostering of social unrest.

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127. Ibid.

128. Ibid., p. 188.

Even before crimes like burglary due to famine condition started taking place political crimes were being frequently committed by extremists in both the leftist and the rightist camps and certain restrictive measures were resorted to by the government.<sup>129</sup>

Political Polarisation :

After the elections it was the JSD that led the so-called opposition (outside the Jatiya Sangsad), its leadership claimed that the liberation war was ended abruptly when it was about to be transformed into a real people's war and that the JSD was the mass front of a "correct" proletarian organisation, the Bangladesh Communist League (BDCL).<sup>130</sup> There were other leftist groups also which were believed to have been inspired by the thoughts of establishing social justice through armed revolution.<sup>131</sup> The most effective of these was the Purba Bangla Sarbohara Party (PBSP) led by a young engineer, Siraj Sikdar who

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129. Between June-July 1973 atleast ten police station were raided and arms looted, five members of the Jatiya Sangsad were killed and few thousands of AL workers killed.

130. For details see Maniruzzaman, n. 9, pp. 167-68. According to Maniruzzaman the underground and armed BDCL was formed by Serajul Alam Khan, former Chhatra League leader.

131. They were, BCP (L), BBCP (M-L), BCP etc.



had a band of educated (mostly engineers in government employ), indoctrinated and strongly motivated and dedicated workers. They had arms and had training in guerrilla warfare obtained during the liberation war.<sup>132</sup> The Sarbohara Party agreed with other ultra-left parties and groups propagating the idea that "the revolution was stopped too soon with the Awami League serving as a puppet government of India."<sup>133</sup>

Thus there was an agreement of views among the so-called ultra left parties including the JSD regarding the objective situation. But, while some believed that the next step was "class-war", and armed struggle others thought that even the nationalist phase was not yet over. However, all of them agreed that the AL government had allowed the economy to be externally dominated. But they differed in identifying the external agencies.<sup>134</sup>

While the right reactionaries and the so-called Maoist groups now supported by Maulana Bhashani indulged in anti-government, anti-India and anti-Soviet

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132. Maniruzzaman, n. 9, p. 171.

133. Ibid.

134. Ibid., pp. 171-74.

Union propaganda, the NAP(M) and the CPB generally supported the government and urged for the unity of all democratic forces for the realisation of any progressive policy adopted by the government. Although the AL on principle was averse (since 1958) to the idea of fronts for the purpose of government formation, this time probably to counter the propaganda by the pro-Chinese and pro-Pakistan elements, it agreed to a front which while remaining outside the government would support it as a group.<sup>135</sup>

Gano Oikyo Jot (GOJ) :

AL leadership called for unity of all patriotic parties in the historic public meeting held on 7 June 1973. Finally on 10 August Sheikh called for the formation of an alliance of the AL, NAP(M) and CPB. In response to this call, a joint meeting of three parties was held on 1st September and on 3rd September 1973, a high level conference of leaders of the ruling AL, the pro-Moscow NAP(M) and CPB was held under the Presidentship of Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.<sup>136</sup> On 14 October the formation of the

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135. Bhabani Sengupta, "Moscow and Bangladesh", Problems of Communism, March-April 1975, p.63.

136. Umar, n. 6, p. 334.

alliance was announced and its declaration and programme explained at a crowded press conference in the presence of the leaders of AL, NAP(M) and CPB at central office of the AL. The alliance of these three parties has been named Gano Oikyo Jot (GOJ).<sup>137</sup> The formation of this alliance was an important incident in the political life of Bangladesh. According to CPB "the purpose of the alliance will be to mobilise the working people, labourers, peasants, middle strata, intelligentsia, student and youth for continuing consistent struggle against all barriers on the way of Bangladesh's advance towards socialism." Special emphasis was laid in the declaration of the alliance for the removal of the immediate problems in the lives of the people and a five point programme was adopted for the purpose. At the same time it was firmly expressed in the declaration, "the alliance will take stern attitude in building up struggle against those who are engaged in conspiracies and sabotaging activities against national independence and progress of Bangladesh and such against the people's interests."<sup>138</sup> The GOJ "resolved to work

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137. The Bangladesh Observer, 15 October, 1973.

138. For details see, Communist Party Publications, n. 113, p. 76.

unitedly, and in close cooperation with one another to liquidate anti-State elements, profiteers, hoarders and all sorts of anti-social forces in the interest of social and economic progress of the country. They also resolved to extend their unity and co-operation down to the thana level."<sup>139</sup>

United Front (UF) :

During the crisis situation in 1974, on April 14, six of the open opposition parties - the NAP(B) Bangla Jatiyo League, Bangladesh Jatiyo League, Bangladesh Gono Mukti Union, Bangladesh Communist Party (Leninbadi) and Sramik-Krishak Samajbadi Dal formed a united front with Maulana Bhashani as the Permanent President. The United Front (UF) at its public meeting held at Dhaka formulated a four point charter of demands. The Front failed to create any mass based support and it never presented any positive programme of its own.<sup>140</sup>

But inspite of formal polarisation, the state of politics continued to be the same. The armed

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139. Umar, n. 6, p. 334.

140. For details see Talukder Maniruzzaman, Group interests and Political Change: Studies of Pakistan and Bangladesh (New Delhi, 1982), p. 130.

factions and groups continued terrorist activities at different places. Dacoity, bank robbery, murder, secret killing etc., continued. A section of the JSD was also indulging in terrorist and anti-social activities such as dacoity, loot, murder, etc. The situation was made all the more complicated by in fighting with the ruling party. Some of the powerful leaders of the AL most of them pro-capitalist tried to split AL.<sup>141</sup> Another factionalism occurred within the AL. Abdur Razzak, organising Secretary AL, and Tofael Ahmed, Political Secretary to the Prime Minister, led one faction with a large following in the Chhatra League. The other was led by Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni, who formed the Awami Jubo League (Youth League). Tensions between the two groups was exploited by foreign agencies, particularly the CIA. Shafial Alam Prodhan, a recruit of the foreign agencies along with other pro-Pakistani associates killed seven students in Dhaka University Hostel on April 4, 1974 to create chaos.<sup>142</sup>

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141. Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Shah Mouzzam Hossain and many others organised many secret meetings. The above group sought to split student groups, such as Chhatra League (Rashid Hasan/group).
142. See, Sangrami Chhatra Samaj, Hattakari Kea ? (Who is the killer?) A pamphlet published from Dhaka, 1974.

This politics in Bangladesh did not help to consolidate a democratic pattern of government. The AL had to function in a political atmosphere of coercion, opportunism, pressure groups, corruption and violence. The extremists and the collaborators who Sheikh Mujib had pardoned, established links with external powers to prevent stability in Bangladesh. Their intention was to wreck parliamentary democracy in the country and replace it by a Fascist type right-wing chauvinist dictatorship under the tutelage of U.S. imperialism.<sup>143</sup> The parliamentary experiment in Bangladesh was undermined by the undemocratic activities of opposition parties and ultra-left and ultra-right groups, and weak institution. So there has been growing demands from within AL and outside AL such as NAP(M), CPB, other quarters for structural changes in the government.

#### The Emergency :

It was increasingly being felt that the two major tasks of improving the law and order situation and the general economic condition could not be accomplished through the existing institutions and agencies.

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143. For a discussion on foreign funding of anti-national activities in Bangladesh see, Shaeed Bari, "New Direction in Bangladesh", Mainstream (New Delhi), Vol. XII, No. 23, Feb. 8, 1975, p. 8.

People close to Sheikh Mujib (Sheikh Moni, M. Mansoor Ali, Abdur Razzak) started openly discussing how the existing situation could be overcome and wondered what kind of system would be suitable to accomplish a socialist transformation. They argued that the country was more important than the system. The Prime Minister Sheikh Mujib in his broadcast to the nation on the eve of Victory Day (December 16, 1974), stated that three thousand AL leaders and workers - including four MPs - had been killed by the terrorists.<sup>144</sup> On 25 December 1974 a member of Parliament and Chairman of Union Parishad were brutally murdered while they were offering Eid Prayers. "In view of the grave situation created by hostile elements acting in collusion with the collaborators of Pakistan Army, extremists and enemy agents in the pay of foreign powers...."<sup>145</sup> In view of these developments, on 28 December 1974, the President of Bangladesh issued a proclamation of state Emergency under clause (1) of Article 141 A of Constitution.<sup>146</sup>

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144. The Bangladesh Observer, 17 December 1974.

145. Maniruzzaman, n. 133, p. 163.

146. The Bangladesh Gazette Extraordinary (Dhaka) December 28, 1974. Also see, The Bangladesh Observer, 29 December, 1974.

Just as various anti-national activities were not isolated events but parts of a well laid plan, the formation of GOJ and imposition of the emergency were also not isolated events. These were the beginning of radical changes in the system that were to be introduced in a short while, namely, a Presidential system with a single national Party. This Party was named as Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) and the details of the formation of the BAKSAL will be discussed in the next chapter.

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## Chapter - II

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### ALTERNATIVE : THE BAKSAL PACKAGE

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In the process of building the three party alliance Gano Oikyo Jot (GOJ) a comprehensive plan for a completely different system for Bangladesh was also being discussed among the leaders of these parties. They agreed that an alternative system was required since the existing one proved inadequate for the purpose of Bangladesh's national reconstruction. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the opposition (to the AL and its allies) also demanded a *thorough change. Their contention was that a* bourgeois parliamentary democratic government which was a mere stooge of the 'expansionist' India and 'social imperialist' Soviet Union could not be the instrument of a radical social change. They further demanded that either the rightful agents of such change should form the government or a revolution was required. The AL leadership and allies also admitted that the existing Westminster type system, the age-old colonial type of administrative structure were inadequate instruments for socialist transformation. What was required was grassroot level all-purpose decentralised administrative and economic

units and disciplined and indoctrinated cadres under a strong leadership. What was further required was stability to achieve societal progress. They further contended that since the opposition could not offer any alternative and remained only in name and was able to create only chaos in the name of demands for social transformation, their nuisance value could be neutralised by a comprehensive programme in which those who really care for socialist transformation could also participate. It was also felt by the GOJ that since the vast majority of the people, except those who were anti-national and a handful of ineffective elements, accepted Sheikh Mujib as their leader and his ideal and objective as theirs - a change in the system under his leadership to fulfil their objectives would be accepted even if that meant shelving of the existing Westminster type of democracy.<sup>1</sup>

From September 1974, Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni President, Awami Jubo League began to advocate publicly the view that the parliamentary system had

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1. For further details what the GOJ felt see, Moudud Ahmed, Bangladesh - Era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Dhaka, 1983), p. 226.

failed in Bangladesh and another revolution was inevitable. Jubo League member Syed Ahmed (now BAKSAL leader), Shafiqul Aziz Mukul (now BAKSAL leader) also supported Sheikh Moni's views. Sheikh Moni suggested that this "second revolution" should also be led by Sheikh Mujib.<sup>2</sup> From the beginning of November 1974 the leaders of the National Awami Party (M) and Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) had also been advocating the abolition of Parliamentary system. The veteran CPB leader Moni Singh said :

...we therefore need not live in a parliamentary system, which can only lead to stratification of the classes and which, in effect, legitimizes exploitation of the poor by the rich. The Parliamentary system cannot but be a major road block to significant social change. What we need is an effective, efficient, honest and ideologically sound government, a government of progressive and democratic forces under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman... the economic and political problems of Bangladesh cannot be solved through the Parliamentary System.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Sheikh Moni's speeches in Awami Jubo League meetings, daily Banglar Bani (Dhaka) September 24, and October 12, 1974.
  3. Moni Singh's speech quoted in Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Moscow and Bangladesh", Problems of Communism, (Washington), March-April 1975, p. 64.

Since early 1974 and particularly since the proclamation of Emergency,<sup>4</sup> there was widespread speculation in Bangladesh that there would be a change over from parliamentary to Presidential form of government. The CPB, NAP (M) and some close followers of Sheikh Mujib<sup>5</sup> had long been pointing to the inadequacies of the existing system and extended support for a presidential system for far reaching changes. Moni Singh later explained:

In this situation our party [CPB] raised demands for a really functioning and powerful national united camp of all patriotic progressive forces in the country, basic changes of the present political system making room for actual participation of the working people in administrative and nation building productive activities, formation of a new government with non-corrupt and efficient patriotic elements headed by Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rehman.<sup>6</sup>

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4. The proclamation of Emergency gave the government wide powers to censor the press, ban strikes and lockouts, intercept personal communications, suspend the functioning and activities of any political party, trade union, club or association. The power also included death penalty for hoarders, smugglers and black marketeers.
  5. e.g. Sheikh Mujibur's close followers like, Sheikh Moni, M. Mansoor Ali (Mujib's cabinet minister and important AL leaders), Abdur Razzak (organisation secretary AL) Mchiuddin Ahmed (AL leader).
  6. CPB Chairman Comrade Moni Singh, address in the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India at Vijayavada (India), see New Age (New Delhi) 2 February 1975, p. 7.

While such suggestions were made from various quarters, the AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) met (from 19-21 January 1975). The meeting also attended by AL Working Committee (WC) members on invitation, discussed various aspects of national problems, admitted the government's failure to fulfil the aspiration of the people. But no solution was evolved. Sheikh Mujib also did not offer any concrete suggestion. But the trend of the discussion pointed towards a change - which was not liked by many party members although they did not voice it there. Rather, the meeting at its concluding session authorised Sheikh Mujib "to take any step he considered necessary for resolving the problems the country was facing."<sup>7</sup> Briefing newsmen at Ganobhavan (Dhaka) after the meeting the chief whip ALPP Shah Moazzem Hossain said, that there was no opposition at ALPP meet in authorising the Prime Minister to take decisions.<sup>8</sup>

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7. For details of the ALPP meeting the Bangladesh Observer (Dhaka) 22 January 1975 and Ahmed, n. 1. P.234
8. After the 15th August coup of 1975 Shah Moazzem Hossain criticised Mujib's policy and BAKSAL system, directly cooperated with Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed's Politico-Military Govt. and has now joined Gen. Ershad's Cabinet as a member of the government party Janodal.

The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution :

Four days later Sheikh Mujib took the step for "resolving the problems of the country" by introducing an amendment bill, which was moved by the Law Minister Manoranjan Dhar on January 25, 1975.<sup>9</sup> The amendment provided for the office of the President in whom would vest all executive powers. The President was to nominate a Vice-President and a Council of Ministers headed by a Prime Minister, who were to be answerable to the President and hold office during his pleasure.<sup>10</sup>

It had been reported that the bill hardly elicited any discussion in the House and was passed into an Act within a couple of hours, after its introduction. Seven opposition and independent members had earlier walked out in protest.<sup>11</sup> The Bill was passed with 294 votes in favour and none against.<sup>12</sup> Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, father of the nation assumed the office of the President of Bangladesh. He was sworn in at a brief and simple

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9. See The Bangladesh Observer, 26, January 1975.  
 10. The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975.  
 11. Holiday (Dhaka), Weekly, 26 January 1975.  
 12. The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975.

ceremony held at the Parliament House. Speaker Abdul Malek Ukil administered the oath of the office and secrecy.<sup>13</sup> Sheikh Mujibur Rahman speaking in the Jatiyo Sangshad termed the constitutional changes as a "second revolution" aimed at emancipating the toiling masses from the exploitation and eradicating all kinds of injustices.<sup>14</sup>

In the Jatiyo-Sangshad speech Sheikh Mujib while indicating the socio-political ills of the country, mentioned the inadequacy of the colonial<sup>bureaucratic</sup> and judicial system and favoured radical structural changes in both to make them people-oriented. He dwelt upon the law and order problems created by anti-government armed clandestine groups which were involved in political killings, other anti-social elements involved in smuggling, hoarding, black marketing etc. He was emphatic about the negative role played by the educated section (of 5%) which actually was exploiting the people (95%). He also mentioned the economic maladies culminating in the famine and dependence for food on external assistance and hinted at conspiracies to undo Bangladesh.

Addressing the Sangshad for the last time as Prime Minister Sheikh Mujib said, the constitutional

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13. The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975.

14. Ibid.

change would ensure the "establishment of the democracy of the exploited". He lashed out at corrupt people and firmly announced that his government would take all steps to annihilate them. He invited all shades of opinion in his hard task of reconstructing the nation with the same spirit they displayed during the war of liberation. He issued a note of warning to those who did not believe in Bangladesh and the four state principles. He said such people had no right to live in Bangladesh.<sup>15</sup>

Sheikh Mujib underscored the importance of a self-reliant economy by accelerating production in all sectors and by reducing the dependence on others. He said, no self-respecting nation could go on begging for an indefinite period of time. He urged the nation to produce or perish. He expressed his grave concern at the rapid growth of population and warned that failure to check the population boom would head the country toward a total disaster in 20 years time. He said that Bangladesh had become the hotbed of international clique. He informed the

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15. For the full text of Sheikh Mujib's speech, see, The Bangladesh Observer, 26th January 1975 and Khondokar Mohammed Ilias (ed.), Bangladeshher Samai Biplobha Bangobandhur Darshan, Bengali, (Dhaka), 1979, pp. 204-218.



House that a group of people who had not reconciled themselves to Bangladesh were conspiring against the independence of the country at the behest of their foreign masters. He said he knew who these people were and declared amidst thunderous cheers that the sovereignty of the nation would be preserved at all cost by eliminating the foreign agents. He regretted that the persons who were granted amnesty did not correct themselves and were still working against the interest of the nation.<sup>16</sup> Sheikh Mujib said:

Today we are moving ahead towards socialism. We have taken steps to ensure that socialism is established here. We know there will be attempts to stop us. Those who lost their wealth as a result of our steps and some foreign powers whose interest have suffered, are today trying to dislodge our attempt to establish socialist economy.<sup>17</sup>

Mujib justified this fundamental change he introduced in the Constitution immediately after the Fourth Amendment was passed by the Parliament. In his address in the Jatiyo Sangshad on 25th January, Mujib narrated the entire situation of the country and

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16. Ibid.

17. Ilias, n. 15.,

asserted that the Constitution was changed in order to establish "the economic freedom of the masses in an exploitation-free society and to establish socialism and democracy of the exploited." He said the Presidential system ensured "full democratic rights to the people who would be free to elect their President and members of the Parliament." Mujib said that the changes were made much to his pain and he was sorry that the Constitution had to be amended but he had no other alternative. He could not allow the country to move in the same way as it had been going so far. The system so long pursued had failed to do any good to the ordinary people of the country. He said he had to struggle all-through his life to free the people from the colonial rule of the past. The exploitation during the 25 years of Pakistani rule had ruined the economy. "The exploiters", he said, "were strong and hit us hard, we were compelled to strike final blow to them". Mujib reminded the Parliament that he already had a lot of power as the Prime Minister and enjoyed all the executive powers of the state but still a fundamental change was necessary in the Constitution" in order to create a healthy administration where people would be able to

sleep peacefully and would be free from injustice and repression". A "radical change in the judicial system" would provide for speedy dispensation of justice.<sup>18</sup>

According to the Constitution (Fourth) Amendment Act, 1975 Chapter I and II of Part IV of the Constitution, relating to the office of (i) the President and (ii) the Prime Minister and the Cabinet was substituted by that of (i) the President and Vice-President and (ii) the Council of Ministers respectively. It provided for a President of Bangladesh to be elected by direct election (Art. 48:1). It also provided for the office of a Vice-President (Art. 49). The executive authority of the republic was to be vested in the President and was to be exercised by him, either directly or through officers subordinate to him (Art. 56:1). The President was, in the exercise of his discretion, to appoint from among members of Parliament or persons qualified to be elected as members of Parliament, a Prime Minister and such other Ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy

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18. Ibid, also see Ahmed, n. 1, p. 243, Mujib's Jatiyo Sangshad speech for details see, Shafiqul Aziz Mukul (ed.) BAKSAL Samprke Bangobandhu (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1979), pp.9-29.

Ministers as he deemed necessary (Art. 58:3). When a bill passed by the Parliament was presented to him, he might within 15 days of the presentation of the bill, assent to it or declare that he with holds assent therefrom (Art. 80:3). The President might be impeached on a charge of violating the Constitution or a grave misconduct when moved by a notice of motion signed by not less than two-thirds of total number of members of Parliament (Art. 53:1).<sup>19</sup>

The Chief Justice and other judges were to be appointed by the President (Art. 95:1). A judge may be removed from office by order of the President on grounds of misbehaviour or incapacity (Art. 96:2) as against the earlier provisions requiring a resolution of Parliament supported by a majority of not less than two-thirds of total number of members of parliament. Appointment to subordinate courts was also to be made by the President in accordance with rules made by him in that behalf. According to the earlier provision, the district judge was to be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Supreme Court, and in

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19. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Law, Parliamentary Affairs, The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh : As Modified upto 28th February 1979 (Dhaka, 1979), pp. 112-126. Also see The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975.

case of any other person, after consulting the appropriate public service commission and supreme court (Art. 115). The control and discipline of district judges and magistrates exercising judicial functions were to vest in the President as against the Supreme Court as provided for earlier.<sup>20</sup>

Another significant and most important amendment was made with the introduction of Part VI-A in the Constitution, which provided that with a view to giving full effect to any of the fundamental principles of state policy set out in part II of the Constitution, the President would take all necessary steps for the formation of a national party. All matters relating to nomenclature, programme, membership, organization, discipline, finance and function of the National Party were to be made by order of the President (117A:3). Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, when the National Party was formed, a person who was a member of the Parliament would cease to be one and his seat would be vacant if he did not become a member of the National Party within the time fixed by

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20. Ibid. Also see I.N. Mukherji, "Constitutional Development in Bangladesh", Foreign Affairs Report (New Delhi), Vol. XXIV, No. 10, Oct. 1975, p. 162.

the President. Further, he would not be qualified for election as President or as a member of Parliament, if he was not nominated as a candidate for such election by the National Party (Art. 117A:5).<sup>21</sup>

The Amendment also extended the term of the first Parliament. It provided that notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, the Parliament functioning immediately before the commencement of this Act would, unless sooner dissolved by the President, stand dissolved on the expiration of the period of five years from such commencement (Art.34). While extending the term of the Parliament, the duration of its sitting was made quite indeterminate, subject only to the condition that there was to be at least two sessions of the Parliament every year (Art. 72:1). Further, the amendment of Article 44 of the Constitution stripped the Supreme Court of the power to enforce Fundamental Rights. According to the amendment, Parliament could by law, establish constitutional court, tribunal, or commission for the enforcement of fundamental rights.<sup>22</sup>

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21. Ibid, p. 122.

22. See "Text of Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Bill in The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January, 1975. For details, Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act, 1975, The Constitution n. 19, pp.112-126.

The other important amendment made was related to the sessions of parliament. It was originally provided that the intervening period between the end of the session and the beginning of the new would not exceed 60 days. In the Fourth Amendment this provision was made to the effect that there would be "at least two sessions of Parliament every year" reducing the role of the Parliament to a minimum.

It can thus be seen that the Constitution (Fourth) Amendment Act vastly augmented the powers of the President and his overwhelming control over the judiciary blurred the theory of separation of powers between the executive and judicial organs of the state. It is true that as Prime Minister, and the leader of a party which commanded 307 of the 315 seats in parliament, Sheikh Mujib commanded considerable power under the parliamentary system. In spite of such massive majority, lawlessness and violence continued unabated, and administrative malfunctioning caused rampant corruption, which assumed ever increasing proportion. Many such instances of inefficiency and corruption are alleged to have thrived under political patronage and interference. This had considerably

eroded the credibility of the AL, particularly in the urban areas. Moreover, factional in-fighting within the AL had assumed disastrous proportion, resulting in intra-party feuds. The containment of such a situation necessitated that ever increasing power be given to the chief executive. It is in this context that the power provided to the Prime Minister under the parliamentary system while substantial, was often found to be inadequate. It was because of this inadequacy that the Prime Minister had, from time to time, to transgress his limits and usurp the power, privileges and prerogatives of the President.

After taking over Presidentship, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman appointed M. Mansoor Ali as Prime Minister and also named 16 others for the Council of Ministers.<sup>23</sup> Tofael Ahmed (MP) and former Political Secretary to the former Prime Minister was appointed Special Assistant to the President with rank status and privilege of a Minister of State.<sup>24</sup> M. Ruhul Quddus Principal Secretary to the former Prime Minister was appointed Principal Secretary to the President with rank status and privileges of a Minister of State.<sup>25</sup>

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23. For details see, The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975.

24. The Bangladesh Observer, 30 January 1975.

25. Ibid, 31 January 1975.



Jatiyo Sangshad members M.A.G. Osmani, and Mainul Hossain protested against the new system and resigned from the Jatiyo Sangshad. Their seats were declared vacant following their resignation by a notification of the Jatiyo Sangshad.<sup>26</sup>

The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution which brought about fundamental changes in the form of the government, however, was not an end in itself. As later developments proved, it was only a part of a comprehensive alternative package which was designed to be instrumental for fulfilling the aspirations of the people. The scheme envisaged by Mujib through the Fourth Amendment also included establishing the party superiority over the government and as such it would lead to (1) integration of party and the government; (2) integration of party and other organs of the state bureaucracy including the armed forces, judiciary and the parliament; (3) forging unity of the people through the existence of a single party in the country which would create a pool of capable people from all walks of life to build the country, but would exclude and eliminate collaborators to the new system; (4) provide

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26. Both were elected in 1973 on AL nomination. See The Bangladesh Observer, 12 February, 1975.

democracy of a type where people's representatives would be elected by exercise of popular vote to elect from amongst three or four persons nominated by the national party.<sup>27</sup>

Second Revolution :

The swearing in of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on 25th January 1975 marked the beginning of the "second Revolution", with socialism as its guiding light. Sheikh Mujib said, "that the constitutional change was a second revolution."<sup>28</sup>

Earlier Sheikh Mujib had said :

Socialism is necessary for us, without socialism the destitute people of this country cannot be saved. We want an exploitation free society and equal distribution of wealth.... But the path to socialism is indeed very difficult. You have to work and struggle hard to achieve socialism...."

He also said :

We would have faced no difficulty if we did not establish socialistic policies. If we called in the exploiter class and handed over our economy to them we would not

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27. Ahmed, n. 1, p.244.

28. The Bangladesh Observer, 26th January 1975.

have any difficulty for the present. But what of the future? We would have to bring about another revolution. There would be no other way left.<sup>29</sup>

The main object of the second revolution was national unity and participation of the people for reconstruction of the country in the spirit which guided them during the war of liberation. Sheikh Mujib said, "the new revolution would carry forward the task of implementing the four state principles. He warned those who did not believe in Bangladesh and her basic principles. Such people, he said, had no right to live in Bangladesh. He called upon the people "to take a fresh vow to begin a new life and join in the task of national development."<sup>30</sup>

The second revolution spelt out the four objectives: (1) elimination of corruption, (2) increasing production in both the agricultural and industrial sectors, (3) effective population control

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29. Sheikh Mujibur address to the second Congress of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) on 4 December 1973. For details see, Prabhat Das Gupta and Girish Mishra, Bangladesh: About Turn in Economic Policy (CPI, Pub., New Delhi, 1976), p. 3. Also see, Joy Bangla, The Bengali Booklet of Jatiya Mukti Bahini, 17 March 1977, p. 19.

30. See The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975.

and (4) achievement of national unity.<sup>31</sup>

It was thus a logical corollary that the new system had been devised to carry out the historic responsibilities of the second revolution. The old system was found to be obsolete for the nation which had won independence through a historic armed struggle and was now marching on the path of second revolution to create an exploitation-free new social order. The undisputed leader of 75 million Bangalees Sheikh Mujib proclaimed: "I want to smash the old moth-eaten decadent administrative system and create a new one. This new system of mine is Revolution." He said, "the decadent social system which was the legacy of the British and the Pakistani colonial rule must not be allowed to continue. The whole social system should be recast in the new perspective." Mujib urged the people to socially boycott corrupt elements. He said, the four point objectives of second revolution was not the end, it was only the beginning.<sup>32</sup>

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31. Sheikh Mujib's 26 March speech, The Bangladesh Observer, 27 March 1975.
32. Bangobandhur Nirdishita Pathea Sanitantra Protisthar Lakkhee Baksal Karmasuchhi, A Bengali booklet published by Sardar Amzad Hossain (Publicity sec. AL) on behalf of AL (Dhaka, N.D.).

Purpose of Second Revolution :

Political circles representing different shades of opinion described it as a step in the right direction and expressed the confidence that it would lay the foundations of a healthy political system ushering in a democracy of the exploited masses. In a press statement issued in Dhaka on 25 January 1975, General Secretary of CPB, Mohammad Farhad noted with satisfaction that the "Father of the Nation has directly taken up power as the President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh". He also said, this was a "historic moment in bringing to an end an era of parliamentary bourgeois democracy in the country."<sup>33</sup>

Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, President NAP (B) on 8 March 1975 expressed his total support to the second revolution launched by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and wished success of the revolution. Talking to newsmen on the eve of the President's departure for Khulna from the residence of Maulana the nonagenarian leader said categorically, "I support the second

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33. See The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975.

revolution", and "I will support any policy of Mujib's Government which will aim at attaining self-reliant economy for the country."<sup>34</sup>

Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL):

The Fourth Amendment (January 1975) had stipulated that Sheikh Mujib would continue to hold the position of the President of Bangladesh for the next five years and had empowered him to form a single National Party, and suspend the activities of all other political parties and groups. This clearly indicated the trend. And as anticipated, a Presidential order promulgated on 24 February 1975 declared the formation of the single national party, The Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) with Sheikh Mujib as its Chairman.

The Party was formed entirely on an interim basis and the President took upon himself to lay down the format, for its actual operation. Until such mechanism was evolved and the rules framed, the interim arrangement was to continue. This meant that all AL members of Parliament including all types of ministers

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34. "Bhashani backs second revolution" in The Bangladesh Observer, 9 March 1975.

became members of the new party, under a separate order. As for the non-AL MPs, the door was kept open for them to join the party and retain their seats.<sup>35</sup>

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had stated categorically in his last speech in the Parliament that any one willing to build the country would be more than welcome in the national party. The prime objective of the whole exercise was to bring a new hope to the country's political, social and economic development and progress and this could be effectively done only if the various shades of opinion would bury their hatchets and initiate the task of galvanising themselves into a formidable construction force. In the explanatory note of the presidential order which justified the dissolution of the political parties and the emergence of one national party, it was said that this was intended to give full effect to the fundamental principles of the state policy as set out in the Constitution, namely, nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism.

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35. The People (Dhaka) 25 February 1975. Also see Abdur Razzak, Sadaharan Sampaduker Report, AL Bishaesh Council, 1983, A Bengali booklet (Dhaka, 1983).

The following is the text of the three separate Presidential orders<sup>36</sup> released through the Ministry of Law, Parliamentary Affair and Justice on 24 February 1975 :

ORDER

Whereas the President is satisfied that with a view to giving full effect to the fundamental principles of state policy set out in part II of the Constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh namely, nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism, it is necessary to direct that there shall be only one political party in the state;

Now, therefore in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of the Article 117A of the constitution of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh, the President is pleased hereby to direct that there shall be only one political party in the state.

ORDER

In exercise of powers conferred by clauses (2) and (3) of Article 117A of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the President is pleased to form a National Party to be called the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League with the President as its

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36. See The Bangladesh Observer, 25 February 1975; Also see The People, 25 February, 1975.



Chairman, and he shall take all measures necessary for its organisation and have all powers necessary for the conduct of its affairs.

ORDER

All members of Parliament belonging to the defunct Awami League and members of the Council of Ministers, ministers of state and deputy ministers shall be deemed to members of the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League, unless otherwise directed by the President.

Until the organization is determined by the President, all committee of the defunct AL, other than the central committee, shall continue to function as an interim arrangement as committees of the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League.

According to two other separate Presidential Orders on 25 February 1975, the Vice-President, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, all the members of the defunct AL central working committee also became members of the BAKSAL unless otherwise directed by the President who was also the Chairman of the newly formed national party. The President also directed that the Central office of the defunct AL would be the head quarters of the National Party as an interim arrangement.<sup>37</sup> Sheikh Mujib said:

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37. See Bangladesh Observer, 26 February 1975.

One party is formed to create national unity. Those who love the country, believe in its ideals accept four principles, lead honest life all can become the members of this party excepting the foreign agents and those who illegally take money and those who want to create chaos.<sup>38</sup>

Later President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced the Constitution of the National Party - the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League vide S.R.O. No. 191.L - 6 June 1975. Under the power conferred on him by Clause (3) of chapter 117A of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh the President framed the BAKSAL Constitution consisting of 24 articles.<sup>39</sup>

The Constitution of the party was geared towards achieving overall social, political and economic progress of the country on the basis of four state principles.<sup>40</sup> Along with the Constitution, the Chairman Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also announced a 15 member Executive Committee and 115 member central Committee. Prime Minister M. Mansoor Ali was made

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38. Sheikh Mujib's speech, see The Bangladesh Observer, 30 March 1975.

39. Ibid, June 8, 1975.

40. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and M.H. Rahman, Gathan tantra: Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League A Bengali Booklet, 6 June, 1975.

the BAKSAL Secretary General. Zillur Rahman, Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni and Abdur Razzak were made Secretaries of the party. Sheikh Mujib also announced five fronts of the party each headed by a General Secretary. The Fronts were: the Jatiyo Krishak League (JKL), General Secretary Phani Bhushan Mujumdar; Jatiyo Sramik League (JSL), General Secretary Professor Yusuf Ali; Jatiyo Mohila League (JML), General Secretary Sajeda Choudhury; Jatiyo Jubo League (JL), General Secretary Tofael Ahmed; and Jatiyo Chhatra League (JCL), General Secretary Sheikh Shahidul Islam.<sup>41</sup>

The Central Committee was meant to supervise the activities of the Government, semi-government, Government controlled and other organisations of public utility. The highest executive power of the party was vested in the Executive Committee.<sup>42</sup>

#### BAKSAL Ideology :

The main objective of the party constitution forged in Bangobandhu's programme of second revolution,

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41. For details see The Bangladesh Observer, 7 June 1975, Sheikh Shahidul Islam and Prof. Yusuf Ali have now joined Govt. party "Janodal".

42. Rahman, n.40, pp. 12-13.

concentrated on the establishment of an exploitation-free society with equitable distribution of wealth. Towards that end, it also aimed at achieving an overall rural development and radical reformation of farming and cultivation through cooperative system. The party pledged to devote itself wholeheartedly with honesty, discipline and firmness.<sup>43</sup>

During the period between formation of the BAKSAL in February 1975 and publication of its constitution in June 1975, Sheikh Mujib had already made known certain proposals for implementation of the objectives of the party. Thus, publication of the party constitution was a formality to institutionalise the proposed system.

The salient features of the operative part of the scheme as envisaged and indicated by Mujib were compulsory multi-purpose co-operative in every village. The cooperatives would be formed in phases and under a 5 year plan all the 65,000 villages would have such cooperatives. In order to increase productivity it was proposed that all cultivable lands would come

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43. Ibid, pp. 1-2.

under the cooperatives. The ownership was to be retained by individuals but they would receive only a share of the produce proportionate to the area owned. The rest would be distributed among the landless peasants. Each village was to be put under the charge of a member of the Central Committee of the BAKSAL and agricultural inputs to be distributed through the cooperatives. There would be an Administrative Council for each thana comprising of representatives from the youths, women, workers, farmers and government officials of different departments belonging to the BAKSAL. The existing districts were to be dissolved and each sub-division would now become a district with a new District Administrative Council. For the purpose of decentralisation of the judicial system, it was proposed to introduce Thana courts.

According to the guidelines laid down in BAKSAL Sheikh Mujib was to be the embodiment of national unity, and the main instrument of ushering fundamental social and political changes contemplated by the second revolution, and so the Constitution of the BAKSAL envisaged supremacy of the National Party over all the organs of State power. The party was entrusted with the task of formulating and, if necessary,

amending state policies and ensuring their faithful implementation. Hence, the constitution of the BAKSAL provided for a close knit monolithic cadre based party.

The BAKSAL announced its determination to contribute towards the efforts of establishing universal brotherhood and international peace. It also pledged its support to the just struggle of the oppressed people all over the world against imperialism, colonialism and racial discrimination.<sup>44</sup>

Sheikh Mujib believed that the march of the country towards progress and prosperity through socialism would be difficult if the honest people including the intellectuals, lawyers, government officials, politicians, etc. were not associated with the task of national reconstruction. The new system had been introduced to ensure the overall development of the country through the participation of the people of all walks of life in one national party. If all walked unitedly in one direction, pooling their best talents, the country would surely attain prosperity and progress and socialism would be established.<sup>45</sup>

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44. For details BAKSAL Constitution, Rahman, n. 40.

45. Sheikh Mujib Speech. For Details see The Bangladesh Observer, 20 June 1975.

Response of Various Parties and Leaders :

The formation of the BAKSAL as the single National Party headed by Sheikh Mujibur as Chairman was hailed by people from all walks of life including the student community. It was called a historic decision for emancipation of the toiling masses of Bangladesh by the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangshta (BSS). Political leaders described the new national party as the instrument of second revolution to establish "Ksishak and Sramik Raj" in the country. Mr. Ataur Rahman Khan MP and leader of the former opposition in the Jatiyo Sangshad and chief of the Bangladesh Jatiyo League said :

I was convinced that President Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman sincerely desired national unity and so I felt, all patriotic citizens should come forward to cooperate with the Bangobandhu. I had decided to join the national party after I had given it a long thought. I had also discussed the matter with my party workers... as a nation which had wrested its freedom from an occupation army, Bangalis were confronting with economic crunch and law and order situation. I believed that progress and development depended on the unity of the people I hoped that the new dispensation under Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will bring prosperity and happiness to the national life, in the present crisis one should not sit as mute

observer or merely play the role of criticiser. They should join the national party and strengthen the hands of the Bangobandhu in salvaging the country from the present crisis.<sup>46</sup>

Veteran AL leader and Mujib's cabinet member Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed said, "the new change in the political system would help to ameliorate sufferings of the struggling masses of Bangladesh... the present Government would no more allow the black marketeers, hoarders and armed bandits to let loose reign of terror in the country taking the advantage of liberation."<sup>47</sup> Pankaj Bhattacharya the then NAP (M) Secretary said, the BAKSAL was an "auspicious step to establish democracy of the exploited." Sheikh Moni, the then chief of Awami Jubo League, later BAKSAL Secretary said, that a logical and inevitable step was taken by Bangobandhu to build up a monolithic progressive society.<sup>48</sup> Dr. Matin Chowdhury the then Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University said, "the system

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46. With the statement made at a press conference at the BAKSAL office Mr. Ataur Rahman Khan joined the BAKSAL in April 1975. See The Bangladesh Observer, 20 April 1975. But after the August 1975 coup he repudiated the BAKSAL system. Currently he is Vice-President of the Janodal - a party backed by the Military regime and has been appointed the Prime Minister of Bangladesh by Gen. Ershad, Chief Martial Law Administrator and self-appointed President.

47. See Mushtaque's Statement, The Bangladesh Observer, 27 January 1975. After the 1975 August coup Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed took over as the President of Bangladesh and was directly involved with the shelving of the BAKSAL system.

48. The Bangladesh observer 28, Feb. 1975



would ensure larger participation of the people representing all walks of life in the governance of the country.<sup>49</sup> Mr. Chai Thowai, an independent member of the Jatiyo Sangshad from Chittagong Hill Tracts said that he was applying for the party membership in response to Bangabandhu's call for national unity. He expressed his complete faith in the dynamic leadership of Bangabandhu and in the ideals and policy of the BAKSAL.<sup>50</sup> Abul Hasnat Mohammad Abdul Hai, member of the Jatiyo Sangshad (Independent) from Sylhet said, "kindly allow me to express my full confidence to your great leadership. The formation of the BAKSAL will go undoubtedly a long way to achieve stability in political, economic and social structure of the new born country. I firmly believe that I can contribute my life to materialise your ideals by joining the political party."<sup>51</sup> Mohiuddin Ahmed (MP) and Rashed Mosharruf (MP) President and Secretary General respectively of the Bangladesh "Jatiyo Palli Unnayan Samabaya Federation in a joint statement hailed the National Party. They said, "this is undoubtedly a bold step toward establishing democracy of the exploited as well as socialism through

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49. The Bangladesh Observer, 27 February 1975.

50. Ibid, 10 June 1975.

51. Ibid, 1 March 1975.

second revolution."<sup>52</sup> Mohammed Abdul Hai, Cultural Secretary of Jessore District Jatiyo Samajtrantik Dal (JSD) intimated his decision to dedicate himself in the path charted out by Sheikh Mujib. In a press statement he said, "the call for Second Revolution given by the Father of the Nation was basically aimed at fruition of the first revolution - the Liberation of Bangladesh through an armed struggle."<sup>53</sup>

Despite Sheikh Mujib's repeated appeals to all political parties to join the BAKSAL, some left parties and ultraleft parties i.e. the JSD, the Purbo Bangla Sarbohara Party, the Samyabadi Dal, the East Pakistan Communist Party (ML), the Bangladesher Communist Party (Leninbadi) abstained from joining the BAKSAL.<sup>54</sup> However some individual leaders and workers belonging to the above parties joined BAKSAL and except the two JSD MPs all the opposition and independent MPs joined the BAKSAL.<sup>55</sup>

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52. Ibid, 11 June 1975.

53. Ibid, 30 January 1975.

54. Talukdar Maniruzzaman, Group Interests and Political Changes: Studies of Pakistan and Bangladesh (Dhaka), 1982, p. 172.

55. Six out of the total eight opposition and independent members of the Parliament joined BAKSAL. Abdullah Sarkar and Moinuddin Manik belonging to then defunct JSD did not join the BAKSAL and lost their Parliament membership.

Thus with the formal launching of the BAKSAL the interim preparatory period ended and work for the implementation of the BAKSAL package scheme began.

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## Chapter - III

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### THE BAKSAL CONSTITUTION

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While speaking for the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution,<sup>1</sup> Sheikh Mujib had said what was needed in Bangladesh was not a democracy of the exploiters but that of the exploited. He pleaded for a democratic system that would not be dominated by the unscrupulous wealthy persons who could buy votes with ill-earned money. He added that it was not new urge it had always been the stand taken by the Bangladeshi leadership.<sup>2</sup>

Later, defending the BAKSAL Package Abdur Razzak, Secretary of BAKSAL explained that the BAKSAL aimed at replacing the conventional elitist democracy which only serve the uppermost five percent of the population and is operated for the benefit of "clever bureaucrats, escapist intellectuals and capitalist

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1. The Fourth Amendment changed the Parliamentary system in Bangladesh to a presidential system.
  2. Sheikh Mujib's speech in Jatiyo Sangshad on 25th January 1975. The Bangladesh Observer, 26 January 1975 (Dhaka). Also see, Shafiqul Aziz Mukul, BAKSAL Sampake Bangobandhu (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1979), p. 15.

exploiters", and used as a "weapon" by the military. BAKSAL was designed to establish a democracy of the exploited masses by making provision for their food, clothing, housing, medical treatment, education, employment, recreation and wages according to the quality and quantity of output, and general welfare. The BAKSAL aimed at creating the condition to make such a democracy feasible.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, provisions for democratic procedures were claimed to have been included in the BAKSAL constitution.<sup>4</sup>

As explained by a veteran leader, the Jatiyo Sangshad, the government and the BAKSAL - all three were products of the constitution of the country and were complementary to one another. The constitution was the Supreme law of the land, the Jatiya Sangshad, the supreme law making body and the BAKSAL - the supreme policy making body in the country.<sup>5</sup>

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3. Abdur Razzak, Bangali Mukti O BAKSAL (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1980), pp. 18-19. Mr. Razzak is the General Secretary of the Present BAKSAL formed in 1983 by a large faction of the Awami League.
  4. Mukul, n.2, pp. 97-8.
  5. See Abdul Malak Ukil's speech, The Bangladesh Observer, 25 July 1975.

Whether the human elements that comprised the BAKSAL were capable of performing the onerous task that the BAKSAL was expected to carry on remain debatable. But a perusal of the BAKSAL constitution would show us whether the party had the makings of a single national party meant to be the carrier of a serves of significant socio-economic changes.

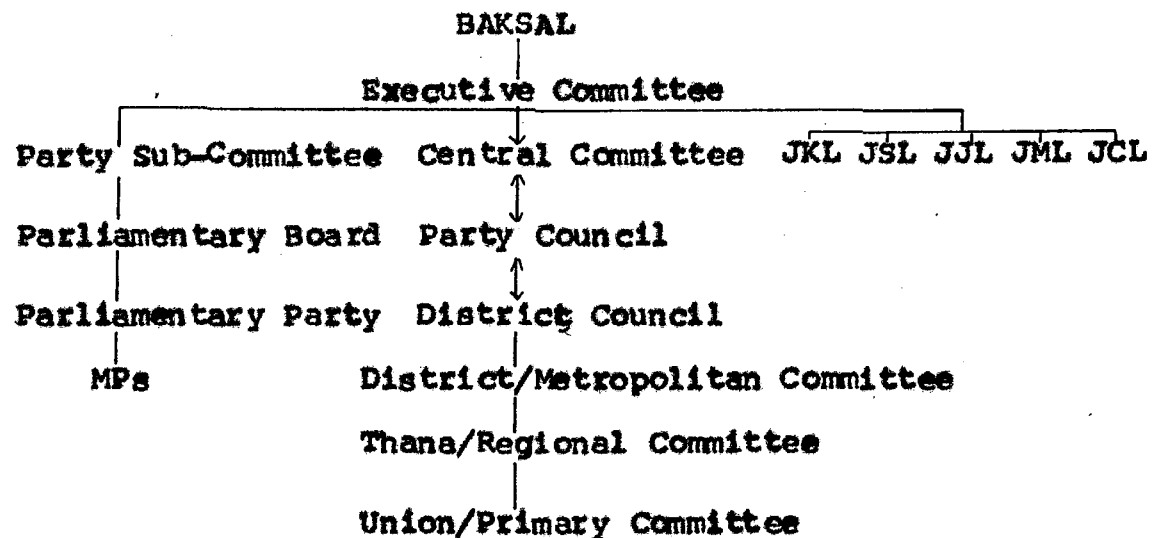
The twenty four clause constitution of the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League announced on June 6, 1975<sup>6</sup> provides for the formation of seven organs, namely (1) Executive Committee (EC), (2) Central Committee (CC), (3) Party Council (PC), (4) District/Metropolitan Committee (DC/MC),<sup>7</sup> (5) District Council (DCI), (6) Thana/Regional Committee (TC/RC) and (7) Union/Primary Committee (UC/PRC). Besides there were to be five front organisations for intensive participation of the peasants, labour, youth, women and student forces under (1) Jatiya

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6. Governments of the People's Republic of Bangladesh order S.R.O.No. 191-L-6th June, 1975 under the power conferred on him by Clause (3) of chapter 117A of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (see The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh - As modified upto 28th February 1979 (Dhaka, 1979), p. 122). The president has framed the constitution of the BAKSAL.
  7. According to the BAKSAL Constitution Clause 5, sub-section I, for the purpose of the organisation of the National Party, the current subdivisions were upgraded as district for all administrative purposes.

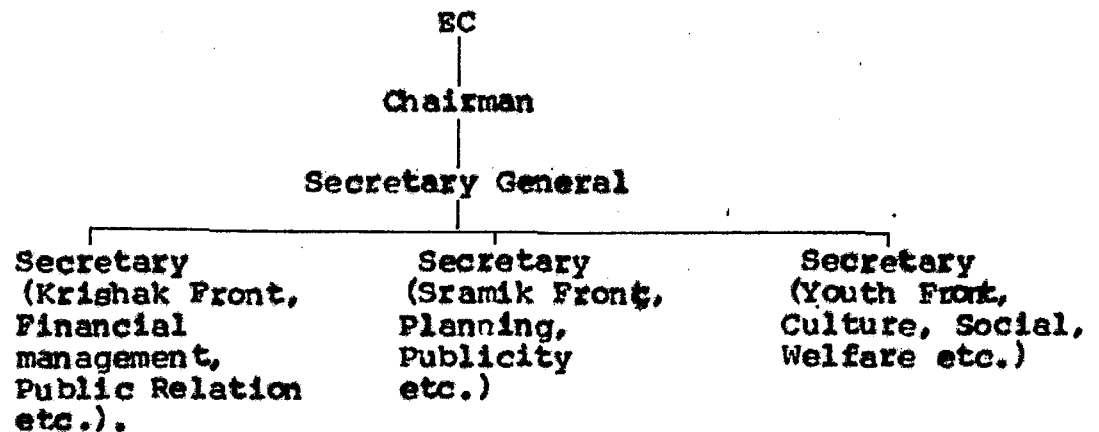
Krishak League (JKL), (2) Jatiye Sramik League (JSL), (3) Jatiye Jubo League (JJL), (4) Jatiye Mahila League (JML), and (5) Jatiye Chhatra League (JCL) respectively.

Diagram III.1

Organisational structure of the BAKSAL



Structure of the Executive Committee



As can be seen from diagram III.1, the vertical form of the party rises from the democratic base of the union/primary committees to the apex of the EC which is invested with the highest executive power; the five fronts such as JKL, JSL, JJL, JML, and JCL are also to work under the direct control of the EC. The EC takes necessary steps for constituting and conducting the activities of the fronts. The EC collectively formulates party policy and takes party decisions, but all the EC members will have their individual responsibility and authority to execute their duties.<sup>8</sup> The Central Committee is held responsible for the preservation of the principle and the constitution of the party as the main body of the organisation, and also for implementation of the general principles and programmes.<sup>9</sup> The Central Committee supervises the activities of the Government, semi-Government, Government controlled and public utility organisations. The Primary Committee is to maintain direct contact with the people of the area of institutions and remain very active for the total

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8. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and M.H. Rahman, Gathan tantra: Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League, A Bengali booklet, June 7, 1975, see BAKSAL Constitution "Clause ten" sub-section four, pp. 10-11.

9. Ibid, Clause Eleven, pp. 12-13.



welfare of the people to organise political activities in the area institution to strengthen the mass base of the party to work for consistent, disciplined, peaceful expansion and strengthening of party work in related fields and to implement the policies of the party.

BAKSAL Membership<sup>10</sup>;

According to the BAKSAL Constitution, any citizen of Bangladesh who is 18 years or above and who will be promise bound to abide by the aims, objects, and the programmes of the BAKSAL, as mentioned in clause one,<sup>11</sup> can become a party member by affixing his signature on the prescribed form provided he promises to follow any order of the party to be ready to work in any organisation of the party to agree to regularly pay the stipulated subscription of the party and to be ready to shoulder the responsibility of implementing the decisions of the party. A citizen would be ineligible for membership if -

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10. Ibid, n. 8; for details see, BAKSAL Constitution, Clause Six, pp. 4-10.

11. Ibid, for details see "Clause One", pp. 1-2.

- (a) he adopted citizenship of any foreign state or declared or admitted loyalty to a foreign state;<sup>12</sup>
- (b) convicted and sentenced by a criminal court for corruption or moral turpitude and if five years have not lapsed after his release;
- (c) sentenced or under-trial for any offence under the Bangladesh Collaborators (special Tribunal) Order or any complaint against him had been lodged with any Government organisation for similar offence;<sup>13</sup>
- (d) it appeared that he was engaged in activities prejudicial to state principles, to public safety and in anti-social and violent activities.

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12. After independence of Bangladesh a large number of non-Bengali (in Bangladesh called Bihari) people and rightist political leaders and workers (like Gokam Azam of Jamaat-e-Islami, Nurul Amin of PDP, Raja Tridib Ray of Chittagong Hill Tracts) expressed loyalty to Pakistan.

13. "Every war of the kind Bangladesh had, produced collaborators. Some collaborate from political conviction some for personal safety and survival and some out of socio-economic compulsion.... The role of some of the collaborators who killed, burnt, raped and looted a large number of people inside the country was not to be forgotten, emotion rose to its peak and the sense of vengeance demonstrated during that time was unnatural." So, soon Sheikh Mujib announced the Bangladesh collaborators (special Tribunals) Order 1972; (President's order, No. 8, of 1972), 24 Jan. 1972. For details see, Moudud Ahmed, Bangladesh: Era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Dhaka, 1983), p.43.

It was further stipulated that the applicant for party membership would have to apply in the prescribed form to the primary or branch committee and would have to submit two taka as annual subscription with his application. If two members personally known to applicant supported his application together with relevant facts about him and if his candidacy was approved in a general meeting of the members of the primary or Branch committee, he would be considered as a candidate member for one year from the date of such approval. The Primary Committee (PC), Thana Committee (TC), Regional Committee (RC), District Committee (DC) and Executive Committee could also directly accept the application of a candidate and similarly grant him candidate membership. The lower branches or units of the front organisations of the party could make recommendation for candidate membership only to the respective branch or unit of the BAKSAL.

Candidate members were allowed to attend party meetings on invitation and take part in discussions. They were promise bound to carry out the responsibilities entrusted upon them. But they had no right to participate in elections to any committee or to get elected or to vote on any resolution.

It was the responsibility of the concerned Party Committee to arrange for his education in party ideology, and for his training regarding the Party Constitution, programmes and actions, and his knowledge of party decisions, etc. and the same committee was to watch his activities. On completion of the period of candidate-membership, the respective committee after having judged the proficiency and progress of the candidate member in education and party activities was to recommend to the party of his candidate membership for further one year or cancel his candidate membership.

The lower committees or units were to recommend full membership of a candidate member to the EC through their respective higher committee/committees. It may however be mentioned that a copy of such recommendation was to be sent directly to the EC. Only the Central Committees of the front organisations could recommend full membership to candidate member to the EC. The EC would take the opinion of the respective direct or primary committee together with full facts. Only the EC could grant full membership of the party.

However, in case of rejection by any lower committee, the EC could be approached for reconsideration

of a candidate member's application. Reports were to be submitted to the higher committees and the EC on any one granted candidate membership. The EC or District Committee could change the decision of the lower committee. A party member could transfer his membership with the permission of his own committee. But for interdistrict transfer permission of District Committees was required.

Of course the Chairman of the BAKSAL could on special consideration, directly grant full membership. In case any employee of any Government, semi-Government, autonomous statutory bodies and corporations, seeking membership, the power to grant him full candidate membership was vest in the Chairman of the Party. However no employee or judge in judicial procedures of the civil courts could ever become a candidate for membership.

Once a candidate for full membership was offered, the applicant was abide by the following conditions, and will have to be required to sign a bound in a prescribed form to the effect that (a) he was 19 years or above in age, (b) he believed in the principles of Nationalism, Democracy, Socialism and

secularism<sup>14</sup> and was engaged in implementing them, (c) he believed in a united and indivisible society, irrespective of race, religion, or caste, (d) he was promise bound to carry out a duty or responsibility assigned by the Central or District Committee, (e) he did not possess any property in excess of any ceiling fixed by any existing law regulating the highest ceiling on properties, (f) he did not either directly or indirectly, openly or secretly make any criticism of any decision, plan of action or programme adopted by the party organization except through the medium of party meetings or sittings.

The members were to be given membership cards after they got full membership with the approval of the EC. Each full member would have to donate a fixed part of his income to the party fund on the rate fixed by the party EC, or in accordance with the rules framed by the EC. In special case the EC could exempt a member of subscription and donation.<sup>15</sup>

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14. See The Constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Constituent Assembly of Bangladesh, (Dhaka, 1973), p. 5.
15. Text of BAKSAL Constitution, "Clause Seven", The Bangladesh Observer (Dhaka), 8 June 1975, also see Rahman, n. 8, p. 8.

(a) Duties of a Member :

A member would regularly participate in the activities of the party organization of which he was a member. He would implement the principles, decisions and instruction of the party. He would work in the interest of the people and the party by keeping himself above personal interest. He would have be aware of the hopes and aspirations and grievances of the people through mass contact. and was required to submit reports to the party of their opinions. He was to develop friendly and brotherly relations with the people by mixing with them with an attitude of mutual human respect and sympathy. He must also take care so that his personal and social activities reflect impeccable conduct, truthfulness, moral bearing and modesty.

A member was expected to work towards strengthening inner party unity and solidarity, to try enhance his knowledge and consciousness about politics and socialism and would study and propagate the party literature. Hewould abide by the party discipline and the constitution and would pay party subscriptions and donations regularly. He was also

responsible for improving the method of co-ordinated work through constructive discussions and self-criticism. He would personally take initiative and discharge responsibilities in taking collective decisions and in implementing them. He was also to make efforts to increase his professional competence and skill with dedication and honesty.<sup>16</sup>

(b) Rights of the Members :

Having thus become a card holder through a rigorous course a party member would enjoy the following rights: (a) take part in elections to party organisations and be elected; (b) can freely take part in discussions and party programmes and decisions; (c) can discuss the activities of any organisation or institution and member and leading worker in party meetings; (d) can submit any of his statements, articles, proposals and petitions before the party conference and to any higher organization; (e) he would also have the right to resign from the party. However, a member desiring to resign would have to apply to his own organization stating the reasons for

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16. The Text of BAKSAL Constitution, "Clause Eight", Rahman, n. 8, pp. 8-9; also see Mukul, n.2, pp. 103-4.



doing so. Pending approval of the EC the organisation may accept his resignation. The member would have to return his membership card, papers and other party properties before his resignation. But if there were any grounds for his expulsion his resignation would be treated as expulsion. In this case also approval of the EC would have to be taken. If any member did not work for the party continuously for six months without any valid reason<sup>17</sup> and or if he did not pay his party subscription every year his membership could be cancelled.<sup>18</sup> Hence, according to the party constitution, only a dedicated, honest, secular nationalist believing in socialism could become a BAKSAL member. Significantly, BAKSAL Secretary General and Prime Minister M. Mansoor Ali said :

the merit of the party member would be judged by their contribution to the national production of goods and services. As members of the national party, which will be their main identity, they would have to come forward with a new attitude towards the materialisation of the party programme.<sup>19</sup>

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17. In Bangladesh many party workers worked only some occasions, basically they were seasonal party workers. Most of them worked in election time only, but they claimed themselves as a regular party workers.
18. Rahman, n. 8, "Clause Nine", BAKSAL Constitution, pp. 9-10.
19. M. Mansoor Ali's speech, The Bangladesh Observer, July 8, 1975.

Party Fund :

The party fund was to be obtained from subscriptions from candidate-members, members elected to the Sangshad, funds obtained from sale of party papers, literature or books, donation or help given at a time, Government sanctions or budget allocations.

The Secretary-General was vested with the responsibilities of handling funds. Government financial advisers and auditors were to be appointed to help him in this regard. The Bank account of the party was to be jointly handled by the Secretary-General and an office-bearer nominated by the Chairman.<sup>20</sup>

Amendment and Interpretation of the Party Constitution :

The Party Council is vested with the power to amend, change or enlarge the constitution. The Chairman if he deemed necessary, could amend, change and enlarge the constitution except clause one of the constitution subject to the approval of the next

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20. See, Rahman, n. 8, "Clause Twenty-one" BAKSAL Constitution, p. 22.

council meeting. However, the Chairman was empowered to interpret the constitution and decisions on matters which may not have specific mention in the constitution.<sup>21</sup>

Special Conference :

The chairman is empowered to call a Special Conference of the party at any time to discuss urgent and important national problems. Such conference was to be held in the assembly of the Chairman, Councilors and other delegates but the total number of delegates attending the Special Conference should not exceed double the number of council members and the delegates sent by the districts, regions, organisation and committees should not exceed the council members elected by those districts, regions, organisation, front organisation and organs. All the members of the EC and CC were be ex-officio delegates to the Special Conference of the Party.

The venue, date, agenda and procedure for the election of delegates would be determined by the EC,

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21. "Clause one" of BAKSAL Constitution for details see Rahman, n. 8, pp. 1-2; also see the BAKSAL Constitution, The Bangladesh Observer (Dhaka), 8 June 1975.

but prior permission of the party chairman would have to be secured in these matters.<sup>22</sup>

Framing of Rules and Control Commission :

The EC was also empowered frame necessary rules within the framework of the constitution for overall control and coordination of all activities of the party. Thus the EC could constitute Control Commission if deemed necessary to ensure that all activities of the party were conducted in proper, integrated, disciplined and coordinated manner.<sup>23</sup>

Party Discipline :

The Chairman was empowered to appoint sub-committees members from the EC or CC to maintain party discipline. If any member of the party was found involved in any activities repugnant to the interest of the party and the ideals, objectives, programmes, constitution and rules and thus violating party discipline, the discipline sub-committee after making necessary investigations would recommend to the Chairman for taking disciplinary action. The Discipline

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22. Rahman, n. 8, "Clause Seventeen" BAKSAL Constitution, p. 18.

23. Ibid., "Clause nineteen" BAKSAL Constitution, p. 20.

Sub-Committee could directly receive allegations of misconduct and breach of party discipline against any member. The member charged with breach of discipline will be given fifteen days time through a written notice for self-defence. However, appeal could be made to the Chairman against any disciplinary action.

The lower committees were required to send letter of request to the District Committee for awarding punishment to any member charged with breach of discipline. The District Committee's decision in this regard would then be sent to the Discipline Sub-committee for final action. In addition to this the District Committee itself, if deemed necessary, could take a decision to adopt disciplinary measure against any member of any committee and send the case after due consideration to the Discipline sub-committee for final action.

Apart from the above procedure, any organisation within the party could warn, deplore and even temporarily suspend any member under it if he was found to be indulging in breach of discipline. The approval of the higher organisation or committee had to be obtained for this. But the decision would remain in force till the approval was obtained. Appeal could be

made to the Discipline sub-committee of the party against such decisions. Similarly, the EC could abolish any committee under it if it was found involved in serious breach of discipline, defiance of party rules and decisions and involvement in any activity repugnant to the interest of the party. If any committee was abolished in this manner, the EC could hold fresh election or nominate a new committee. The Chairman was be vested with powers to take actions on allegations against any member of the EC. could award any punishment and pardon to such members.<sup>24</sup> The party constitution also stipulated that nobody could be eligible for election to the Jatiyo Sangshad or any local Government organisation unless he got the nomination of the National Party (BAKSAL).

Miscellaneous :

According to this clause the Chairman was to preside over the meetings of the EC and the CC of the party as well as the Council session and special conference. In case he was unable to be present in any session or meeting, any member from among the members of the EC was to be entrusted with the

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24. Party discipline for details see Rahman, n. 8., pp. 20-22, BAKSAL Constitution, "Clause twenty", also see The Bangladesh Observer, 8 June 1975.

responsibility of presiding over the meeting. It also states that in case of vacancy in any organisation, committee or body, the Chairman could nominate new members. The same clause maintains that the organisational structure of any organisation in the district, thana, regional, union and primary committees would be determined by the EC in proportion to the number of members and other relevant factors. The fronts, organisation and committee (as described in BAKSAL Constitution Clause 18) would carry out their activities under complete control and total supervision of relevant responsible committees of the party at all levels and in all subjects.<sup>25</sup>

Organisation and Structure of BAKSAL :

According to the BAKSAL Constitution, the party was to have the following fronts; (a) Jatiyo Krishak League (JKL); (b) Jatiyo Sramik League (JSL); (c) Jatiyo Mahila League (JML); (d) Jatiyo Jubo League (JJL) and (e) Jatiyo Chhatra League (JCL). But the Chairman could constitute fronts, organisations or sub-committees in other fields also. These fronts were to work under the direct control of the EC.

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25. Ibid., "Clause twenty-four", BAKSAL Constitution, pp. 23-24.

Soon after the BAKSAL Constitution came into effect, the EC was to take necessary steps for constituting, conducting controlling and co-ordinating the activities of the fronts.<sup>26</sup>

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Chairman of the BAKSAL announced on 6 June 1975 five fronts of the party each headed by a General Secretary. The head of the fronts were, Phani Mujumdar (AL leader and Mujib cabinet member) Jatiyo Krishak League; Prof. Yusuf Ali (now Ershad cabinet member and Janodal member) Jatiyo Sramik League; Begum Sajeda Choudhury (now acting General Secretary AL) Jatiyo Mahila League; Tofael Ahmed, Jatiyo Jubo League and Sheikh Shahidul Islam (Bangladesh Chhatra League President (1972-73) now Janodal leader) Jatiyo Chhatra League. The Chairman of the BAKSAL Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also announced the Five Front Committees in exercise of his power under clause 18 of the constitution of the BAKSAL.<sup>27</sup> (See Appendix-I for the names of the committee members).

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26. Ibid, "Clause eighteen", BAKSAL Constitution, pp. 19-20.

27. For details see, The Bangladesh Observer, (Dhaka), 7 June 1975.



Organisational Principles :

According to the BAKSAL Constitution the following democratic procedure is very much desirable and essential for the strength, solidarity, unity and proper development of the national party to maintain and ensure discipline: (a) Each committee from the lowest to the highest tier to be formed through elections and the Chairman was to appoint the Party Secretary General, Secretaries, members of the EC and other office bearers of the party from among the members of the CC, and determine their duties.<sup>28</sup>

(b) Decisions of the Committees in the Organisation were to be adopted on the basis of the majority opinion and those decisions were to be mandatory on all members. Lower organisations were to follow instructions of the higher committees. Party instructions were binding on all. (c) The lower Committees were required to regularly submit reports to the higher committees and take advice and instructions from them. The higher committees were required to keep the lower committees aware of the overall work

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28. For details see, Rahman, n. 8, pp. 3 and 13; also see The Bangladesh Observer, 8 June, 1975.

programme and the political situation and issue necessary instructions. (d) The higher Committees were required to give importance to the opinions and discussions of the lower committees and ordinary members. (e) Open discussion and review of party principles, their application and the programmes were to be encouraged in every tier of the party. (f) Party decisions would generally be adopted through discussions. If that was not possible, decisions on the related question would have to be taken by majority vote. (g) Decisions taken at the party branches and organisations must be in conformity with the party aims and programmes. (h) Ideologically conscious and devoted cadres were to be built up through regular training.<sup>29</sup>

Executive Committee (EC)<sup>30</sup> :

- (1) The highest Executive power of the party was vested in the EC.
- (2) The number of EC members, including the Chairman and the Secretary General, was to be maximum of

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29. Ibid, "Clause Five" BAKSAL Constitution; also see Mukul, n. 2, pp. 97-98.

30. For details, "Clause ten" BAKSAL Constitution. See Rahman, n. 8, pp. 10-12.

15. All the members of the EC were to be nominated by the Chairman from among the Central Committee members.

- (3) The EC was to perform its day to day functions at the central headquarters of the party under the direct supervision of the Chairman. The Chairman was empowered to determine the organisational structure, work and responsibilities of the central headquarters.
- (4) The EC would collectively take decisions and all the Committee members would have their individual responsibility and authority to execute their duties. The Secretary General under the overall guidance of the Chairman would have the most important role in executing the duties and responsibilities of the EC. He would convene the meetings of the EC, the CC and the Councillors with permission of the Chairman and submit the reports of the proceedings. Secretaries and executive members would perform their duties under the guidance and control of the Secretary General.<sup>31</sup>

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31. The Secretaries and the EC members were required to perform responsibilities allocated to them under the overall supervision of the party Secretary General. For details see, pp. 134-35 of this chapter. The Secretary General was responsible  
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- (5) To maintain party discipline the Chairman would appoint a sub-committee from among the members of the EC or the CC.
- (6) A sub-committee of the EC would act as the parliamentary Board of the party. This sub-committee would comprise members nominated by the Chairman.
- (7) To conduct its different functions the EC could form different sub-councils and sections. If required, CC members with the permission of the Chairman could be invited to the EC meetings but they would not be able to vote. The EC would be able to set rules for all the sub-councils and sections under it.
- (8) The EC would determine the rates of donations and levy to be contributed by the party members.
- (9) The responsibility to publish party organs and other party literature would be laid on the EC and no other committee would be able to publish them on behalf of the party. The EC would appoint the Editor for the party organ.

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for all organisational matters of the party, and also the Mohila Front, and Foreign Affairs besides his other responsibilities.

- (10) The EC would arrange distribution of membership cards.<sup>32</sup>
- (11) The EC would approve District Committees.
- (12) The EC would determine the percentage of representation in the Party Council.
- (13) The EC would regularly help, advise and instruct all national headquarters offices of affiliated organisations and supervise as well as coordinate their principles and activities.
- (14) The EC would supervise and coordinate the activities of the District Committees and offices. The EC would help, advise and instruct the District Committees in their activities.
- (15) The EC would arrange the training of the party members.
- (16) The EC would maintain the accounts of the party funds.
- (17) The Parliamentary party<sup>33</sup> of the BAKSAL would be responsible to the EC.

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32. The members were to be given membership cards after they get full membership. See, Rahman, n. 8, BAKSAL Constitution, "Clause six", p.8.

33. BAKSAL Parliamentary Party which met first time at Ganobhaban (Dhaka) on June 22, 1975 with

(18) The EC would normally meet once in a month.

President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Chairman of the party on 6 June 1975 announced a 15 member EC of the BAKSAL under Article 117A Clause 3 of the Bangladesh Constitution. (For a list of the EC members see Appendix-II). Except Dr. Mazzaftar Ahmed Choudhury all members of the EC were nominated from the defunct AL.<sup>34</sup> According to party notification issued by the party Secretary General M. Mansoor Ali, the allocation of responsibilities of the Secretaries are as follows :

Zillur Rahman : Krishak Front, office administration, registration and records, fund (financial management) and public relations. Sheikh Abdul Aziz was to be associated with him.

Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni: Sramik Front, research and evaluation, planning, publicity, press and publication. Mohiuddin Ahmed was to be associated with him.

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party Chairman in the Chair unanimously elected party Secretary General M. Mansoor Ali leader of the house (Parliamentary party), see The Bangladesh Observer, 23 June 1975.

34. Bichitra, Bengali Weekly, Dhaka 13 June 1975, pp. 8-11. Also see The Bangladesh Observer, June 7, 1975.

Abdur Razzak: Youth (the student) Front, culture, social welfare and training, Gazigolam Mustafa was to be associated with him.<sup>35</sup>

Central Committee (CC)<sup>36</sup> :

- (1) In the interim period between the two sessions of the council the Central Committee (CC) of the party was to be the main organ of the party. Implementation and realisation of the general policies and programmes adopted by the Council and providing political leadership and preservation of the principles and the constitution of the party in the period between two sessions of the council would be the responsibility of the CC. For its entire work the CC was responsible to the Chairman on the one hand and to the Council on the other. The CC would supervise the activities of the Government, semi-government, government controlled and public utility organisations.
- (2) The CC would meet at least twice a year.

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35. See The Bangladesh Observer, 23 June 1975.

36. Text of BAKSAL, "Clause eleven", Rahman, n. 8, pp. 12-13; The Bangladesh Observer (Dhaka), June 8, 1975.

- (3) Proceedings of the previous meeting should be placed before the CC meeting for approval.
- (4) Report of activities of the EC and its statement of incomes and expenditure should be placed before the meeting of the CC.
- (5) The Chairman would appoint the party Secretary General, secretaries, members of the EC and other office bearers of the party from CC and would determine their duties.

President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced a 115-member central committee of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League on 6 June 1975 under article 117A Clause 3 of the Bangladesh Constitution. The Central Committee was constituted with members representing all walks of the national life.<sup>37</sup>

In the 115-member Central Committee ten persons were taken from outside the Awami League. Seven of them were from the NAP (M) and CPB, the others were Mr. Ataur Rahman Khan MP (former opposition leader and chief of Bangladesh Jatiyo League), Haji Mohammed Danesh, an elderly left wing politician, founder

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37. The Bangladesh Observer, 7 June 1975.



member of the Undivided NAP (1957), and Mang Prue Syne, Tribal leader of Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Central Committee also included 20 senior civil servants, the Vice-Chancellors of Dhaka and Jahangir Nagar University, the Editors of Ittefaq, Bangladesh Observer and now defunct BPI (Bangladesh Press International) and the chiefs of Army, Navy, Air-force, Jatiyo Rakhibahini (JRB) BDR, and the police. The Committee had individuals from some others walks of life also.<sup>38</sup> (For detailed Central Committee list see Appendix-III).

Party Council (PC)<sup>39</sup> :

The council was constituted with the following representatives :

- (a) All the members of the EC.
- (b) All the members of the CC.
- (c) Representatives of the District Committees according to the quota fixed by the EC.
- (d) Representatives of the front organisations according to the quota fixed by the EC.

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38. For details see, The Bangladesh Observer, 7 June 1975.

39. For details, see Rahman, n. 8, BAKSAL Constitution "Clause twelve", pp. 13-14.

- (e) Representatives of the Primary Committees as described in Clause sixteen (2) (B) in accordance with the quota fixed by the EC.<sup>40</sup> and
  - (f) Maximum of fifty full party members nominated by the Chairman. Members of the Council were called councillors and would remain member for a five year term.
- (2) The EC was to take decision on the size of the Council and the representation from different District Committees, front organisations and organs etc. However the front organisations, district committees and primary committees were to elect party councillors only from amongst the full members.
  - (3) The Council would meet atleast twice during its term. The Chairman was empowered to call a special session of the Council at any time.
  - (4) Rights and responsibilities of the Council :
    - (a) Power to discuss and take final decisions on the basic principles, programmes and tactics of the party will be vested in the Council,

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40. BAKSAL Constitution, "Clause sixteen (2) (B)... "Subject to the approval of the Chairman Primary Committees of the Party may be formed in different Government or semi-government offices or institutions corporations, autonomous bodies, and military and civilian forces. The EC will fix the highest number of member of these PC." See ibid, p. 17.

(b) if necessary the Council to amend the programme and the Constitution of the party,

(c) to discuss and take decisions on political, organisational and other reports, proposals etc. introduced by the EC. The main political and organisational document to be placed before the Council must be circulated within the entire party at least two months before the Council session. Arrangement was to be made for discussion on it at every tier of the party.

(d) the EC would place before the Council session a report of its activities.

(d) The Council would elect two third of the number of members of the CC every five years. One third of the members of the CC would be nominated by the Chairman. The EC would determine the total number of members of the CC before its election.

District Committee (DC)<sup>41</sup> ;

(1) The District Committee would conduct the affairs

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41. "Clause Thirteen", Text of BAKSAL Constitution. For details see, Rahman, n. 8, pp. 14-15, Mukul, n.2, pp. 109-110.

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of the party in the interim period between two conferences. This Committee would be responsible to the DC for its work.

- (2) The District Committee would be constituted with one Secretary, maximum of five Joint Secretaries and other members whose number would be fixed by the EC. The Secretary would act as the chief of the District Committee.
- (3) A statement of accounts of the DC funds would be placed before its meeting.
- (4) The DC would perform the following responsibilities :
  - (a) Inspection of the work of lower committee and branches and assistance in their work.
  - (b) Directing the work of different mass organisations in the district.
  - (c) Distribution of party organs and literature and keeping their accounts.
  - (d) Maintenance of the party funds.
  - (e) Training of the party cadres.

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According to BAKSAL Constitution clause four subsection one that, "for the purpose of the organisation of the National Party the subdivision created for current administrative reasons will be considered as district."

- (5) The DC would place before the EC, the progress of work under a time schedule fixed by the EC.
- (6) The DC could elect a member if any seat fell vacant, subject to the approval of the EC.
- (7) All the front organisation committees in the district would be under the full control of the DC.
- (8) The DC meeting would be called at least once a month.

On approval of the party Chairman President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman the names of the Secretary and the Joint Secretaries of the District Units of BAKSAL were announced by the Party Secretary General M. Mansoor Ali in Dhaka on August 4, 1975. Accordingly the district units of BAKSAL were formed with one Secretary and five Joint Secretaries.<sup>42</sup> (For detailed list of District Secretary and Joint Secretaries see Appendix-IV).

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42. Also see, The Bangladesh Observer, August 4, 1975.

District Council (DCL)<sup>43</sup> :

The District Council was to be the highest organ of the party in the district. The DC would arrange for the Session of the DCL every five years. Rules regarding representation to this Council and other matters would be determined by the EC. The EC would fix the number of DCL members in proportion to the number of party members. Special council session of the district could be held with the approval of the EC. representatives of the previous conference would be elected representative to the Special Session.

The rights and responsibilities of the DCL include :

- (a) Discussion on the political and organisational report of the DC and decision on it.
- (b) Determination of the party line of work in the party and among the people in consonance with the decision of the CC.
- (c) Election of representatives to the Party Council and the special conference.

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43. Rahman, n. 8, BAKSAL Constitution "Clause fourteen", pp. 15-16.

- (d) Discussion and taking opinion on documents and proposals circulated by the EC.
- (e) Examination of statement of incomes and expenditures of the DCs.
- (f) Election of presidumto conduct the DCL session.

Thana/Regional Committee (TC/RC)<sup>44</sup> :

- (1) Thana committee was to be the highest organ of the party in the Thana. The TC would meet at least once a month. This Committee would elect representative to the DCL.
- (2) The number of the members of the TC would be determined by the EC.
- (3) A Secretary, maximum of three Joint Secretaries as needed and the TC would be constituted with the number of members determined by the EC.
- (4) The TC meeting would be called at least once a month.
- (5) Subject to the approval of the EC, the DC may determine the area of the Regional Committee

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44. Ibid, BAKSAL Constitution, "Clause fifteen", pp. 16-17.

Generally each area would be determined following the administrative division. The DC would supervise the work on the TC/RC. It may however, be mentioned that the EC would also determine the structure of the lower committee.

Union/Primary Committee (UC/PRC)<sup>45</sup> :

- (1) The Primary Committee of the party was to be formed in every union in Bangladesh.
- (2) (a) The PRC could be formed jointly or separately with all the members of the party in factories, industrial and agricultural organisation, farms, cooperative societies, business organisation, educational and cultural institution.
- (b) Subject to the approval of the Chairman, PRC of the party could be formed in different government offices or institutions, corporations, autonomous bodies and military and civilian forces. The EC would fix the highest number of members of this PRC.
- (c) The PRC would be formed with at least five full members.

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45. Ibid, BAKSAL Constitution, "Clause sixteen", pp. 17-19.



(d) The PRC to be formed in the Government, semi-government and other institutions and forces would have to pay special attention, so that the active influence of the Committee was reflected in the conduct of work and administration of these institution, in consonance with the aims and objects of the party. The Committee would also to see that honesty, trust, lawfulness, skill, discipline and endeavour in work were encouraged and bureaucratic attitude was ended.

(3) The responsibility of every PRC was to maintain direct contact with the people of the area or the members of the institutions and remain very active for the total welfare of the people to organise political activities in the area to strengthen the mass base of the party to work for consistent disciplined and peaceful expansion and strengthening of party work in related fields and to implement the policies of the party.

(4) The PRC could divide its members into several branches for proper progress and facilities of the party work.

- (5) The committee would distribute work among branch members and supervise their activities. Political discussions could also be arranged among the branches.
- (6) A Secretary and one Assistant Secretary of the PRC would be elected in its general body if there were more than 20 members in PRC and Executive would have to be elected and one must proceed in this matter according to the instructions of the DC.
- (7) The general meeting of the PRC should be held at least once a month. The general secretary would place before the meeting a report of work and proposals for consideration of all.
- (8) The general meeting would elect representatives to conference of higher party organisations.
- (9) The above mentioned (2) (B), the PRC in the Government or semi-government offices and institution and the military and civilian forces would work under direct supervision of the EC.

- (10) If required a member of the PRC could be associated with the work of some other committee but he would not have the right to vote.
- (11) The PRCs would perform the following duties:
- (a) Implement instructions of the higher committees.
  - (b) Create public opinion in the offices, areas, institution etc. in favour of the political and organizational decisions of the party.
  - (c) Devote itself to work for people's welfare in their own areas.
  - (d) Circulate and sale party organs and literature.
  - (e) Arrange for political training of local cadres.
  - (f) The member of PRC will directly take part in productive and nation building activities.

In Bangladesh the change in the form of government from multi-party parliamentary to one party Presidential system introduced in 1975 through the Fourth

Amendment was meant to realise Bangladesh's national objectives and priorities. The objective of the new national party, the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) was to create conditions conducive for the establishment of a new social order free from exploitation of the toiling masses through the establishment of a socialist economy, and to ensure full and effective democratic rights to every citizen based on the four state principles of Bangladesh sanctified by the Constitution adopted in 1972, namely, nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism.<sup>46</sup>

Naturally therefore, the BAKSAL constitution made significant departure from the constitutions of other liberal democratic parties of Bangladesh and also from the previous Awami League constitution. The BAKSAL constitution provided for a very regulated membership, collective leadership and a very powerful party chief. With these it sought to create a party structure similar to those operating in the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, North Korea, Tanzania and some

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46. For further details regarding Four State Principles see, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Constituent Assembly of Bangladesh, The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Dhaka, 1972), Part II, Art. 9, 10, 11, 12, p. 5.

other East European socialist countries.<sup>47</sup>

Although numerically all the BAKSAL Committees formed at the initial stage were predominated by erstwhile Awami League members, the BAKSAL Constitution differed significantly from that of the AL Party which was in power since independence. The BAKSAL constitution underlines:

- (a) The party would follow the principle of democratic centralisation (which is normally practised in the Socialist countries);
- (b) effective collective leadership within the party would be evolved;
- (c) The country's national planning would be implemented through a multi-class national consensus;<sup>48</sup>
- (d) Unlike the previous practice of keeping the military, para-military and police forces above

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47. For further details regarding socialist countries Party structure see, Kimil Sung, Selected Works (Pyongyang Korea, 1976), Vol. I-VII. A Doak Barnett (ed.) Communist Strategies in Asia: A Comparative Analysis of Government and Parties (West Port; Reprinted, 1976). A.Lashin, Socialism and the State (Moscow, 1977) and V.G. Afansyev, Soviet Democracy in the period of Developed Socialism (Moscow, 1979).

48. BAKSAL at its formative stage comprised all the classes for national benefit but that ultimately it would have to be turned into class organisation.

politics, these organisation and their members would take part directly in politics;

- (e) Instead of multiple political parties and their members utilising their money and energy to win elections, the single national party would sponsor and finance multiple candidates so that the people had a chance to elect the best among them, BAKSAL membership was essential for any elective post;
- (f) The President would be responsible to the national parliament and could be impeached by it. On the other hand the parliamentary party would be responsible to the EC of the BAKSAL;
- (g) The EC of the BAKSAL with the implementation of the party objectives in view, would control and supervise all government, semi-government, government controlled organisations and those organisation directly related to public utility;
- (h) The President of the country being also the Chairman of the party, would be the most powerful functionary of the country till EC of the party with the help of the Parliament could remove him;

(1) The most important feature of the BAKSAL constitution appears to be the rules for membership, the details of which have been explained in the earlier part of this chapter. In this it differed entirely from the erstwhile party in power, the Awami League. The BAKSAL aimed to evolve into a thoroughly trained and committed cadre based national party.

Thus, the BAKSAL constitution laid the foundation of a new indigenous system in which the national constitution, the President, the national party, the national parliament, etc. would establish balanced democratic political structures. The prevalence of the party over the government - which was a new element in Bangladesh politics was obviously unavoidable for the establishment and working of the new system and structures.

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## Chapter - IV

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### STRATEGY, TACTICS AND COMPOSITION OF THE BAKSAL

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At the time when Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and some of his associates devised the BAKSAL, the political life of Bangladesh was divided and subdivided by a multiplicity of mushroom parties with hardly any following. It appeared that national interest had become secondary to conflicts and clashes of personal or group enmity. The BAKSAL was supposedly designed to cut across such cleavages as class distinction, sectional dissension and factional differences, and to serve the overriding purpose of national weal. Thus, what was aimed at involved a thorough change in outlook, attitude and action. And hence Sheikh Mujib called the process the "second revolution", the first being the liberation of the country. The "second revolution" was also supposed to usher in a peaceful process of "socialist transition" of Bangladesh.

A full scale revolution entails a simultaneous process of violent change on the one hand and deliberate constructive activities on the other. In practical



terms it destroys the old political institution and pattern of legitimacy, mobilizes new groups into politics, redefines the political community, evolves new political values and new concepts of political legitimacy. It throws up a new, more dynamic political leadership and lays the foundation of new and strong political institutions.

Lenin pointed out :

Socialist revolution should never be considered as a single battle on a single front: socialism versus imperialism. 'This revolution'... will be a whole epoch of acute class struggle and social upheaval, a whole series of battles on many fronts as the results of the most diverse economic and political transformations which will have matured and be calling for a radical break with the past.<sup>1</sup>

At the first Central Committee meeting of the BAKSAL the keynote of its Chairman's speech dwelt on the radical measures set in motion which were necessary to replace what he called the old, worn out colonial

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1. V.I. Lenin, Complete works, fifth Russian edition, Vol. 54, Politizdat, Moscow, 1965, p. 464, quoted in Rostislav Ulyanovsky, Present-day Problems in Asia and Africa (Moscow, 1978), p. 9.

system that had outlived its utility and not only failed to serve the people's cause, but was damaging it. The philosophy of the new system was to satisfy the historical necessity of forging national unity and integrity for early establishment of socialism, as the only practical means of achieving economic emancipation.<sup>2</sup>

The president Sheikh Mujib advised journalists to use their pen in mobilising strong public opinion against all sorts of corruption and social injustices. He said that he had launched his second revolution to bring an end to social injustice, eradicate corruption and attain self-reliant economy. He said, "political independence gets frustrated if economic freedom do not follow." He said that the corrupt elements had become unnerved and it was time to hit, "when the iron is hot". He said, that his second revolution aimed at bringing happiness and prosperity for all. He sought the cooperation from all in the attainment of the goals of the new revolution. He was confident that the nation with concerted and sincere efforts

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2. The first BAKSAL Central Committee meeting held at Dhaka on 19 June 1975. The Bangladesh Observer, 21 June 1975.

could make the revolution a success.<sup>3</sup> "It means a change in the direction of greater social, economic or political equality and broadening of participation in society and polity."<sup>4</sup>

When he introduced the constitutional change in parliament, Sheikh Mujib declared that he was changing the "system" because the old system had become a free style democracy incapable of solving the country's real problems. The new system which he called his "Second Revolution" would ensure democracy of the "Sarboharas" (have pots).<sup>5</sup>

Although by implication the BAKSAL package could be claimed to be revolutionary, its objectives were characterised by some as "rather reformist in nature" and the major feature of the model were reduced to (a) Presidential form of government; (b) one party system; (c) reorganised administrative structure; (d) change in the production model, to introduce compulsory multi-purpose village level-co-operative;

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3. Sheikh Mujib talking to a group of journalists, see The Bangladesh Observer, 5 June, 1975.
  4. Syed Sirajul Islam, Samajek Paribaton abong Rainaitik Uniyon (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1977).
  5. See Text of Sheikh Mujib's speech, Ittefaq (Dhaka), 26 January 1975.

(e) change in the army structure - Conventional to People's Army and finally, (f) controlled civil liberties.<sup>6</sup>

In fact, the new model was put into operation to change the administrative, judicial and economic systems so that the people could directly derive considerable benefits through the modified political system. And that was how a considerable section of political leadership interpreted and projected it.

Ideological Basis of the BAKSAL :

The Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League as the only national party of the nation aimed at achieving overall social, political and economic progress of the country it sought to establish an exploitation free socialist society through democracy of the exploited masses.<sup>7</sup>

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6. Reunaq Jahan, Bangladesh Politics: Problems and issues (Dhaka, 1981), pp. 116-122. The Government had promulgated the newspaper Annulment of Declaration) Ordinance, 1975 by which publication of all newspapers in Bangladesh except, The Bangladesh Observer, Dainik-Banqla/Ittefaq, Bangladesh Times and 122 weeklies and monthlies stood cancelled from June 17, 1975. For details see The Bangladesh Observer June 17, 1975.

7. For details see, Sheikh Mujib speech, The Bangladesh Observer, 23, July 1975.

The BAKSAL Secretary General, M. Mansoor Ali said, "It is not one party rule. It is the national rule by a national party... launched not to impose one party rule but to establish an exploitation free-society and create a self-reliant and self-respecting nation under the leadership of Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."<sup>8</sup>

Zillur Rahman (BAKSAL Secretary) said, "The new system introduced by Bangobandhu would reach administration and politics to peasants and workers to ensure its benefits for collective interests rather than that of individuals or groups."<sup>9</sup>

Korban Ali (Minister and BAKSAL CC member) said, by this "system the differences and gaps between the political workers and the administrative worker had been removed."<sup>10</sup>

While emphasising the indigenous character of the attempted socialist transition, Dr. Muzaffer Ahmed

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8. The Bangladesh Observer, 12 and 13 August 1975.

9. Ibid, 14 August 1975.

10. Ibid, In 1984 Korban Ali joined "Janodal" and Gen. Ershad Cabinet.

Choudhury (an eminent educationist and BAKSAL EC member) said, that socialism would be based on the objective condition of the country. He also said, "We could achieve self-reliant economy through planned utilisation of the resources and manpower of the country... self-reliant economy was one of the main aims of socialism."<sup>11</sup>

The aim and objectives of the BAKSAL were to provide social liberties and justice in order to end the exploitation of the labouring and backward people including peasants and workers, overall rural uplift, drastic reform in agriculture and its gradual mechanization and introduction of cooperative farming.<sup>12</sup>

Abdur Rab Serniabat (Minister and BAKSAL CC member) said, "cooperatives comprising the cultivators and landowners would be able to increase the agricultural output."<sup>13</sup>

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11. The Bangladesh Observer, 13 August 1975.

12. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and M.H. Rahman, Gathan tantra: Bangladesh Krishakak Samik Awami League, A Bengali booklet, 6 June 1975 (Dhaka) pp. 1-2; also see Abdur Razzak, Bangalir Mukti O' BAKSAL (Dhaka, 1980), pp. 12-13.

13. The Bangladesh Observer, 13 August 1975.

Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni (BAKSAL Secretary) said, "BAKSAL at its present stage comprised all the classes but ultimately it would have to be turned into an organisation of the working people guiding the productive forces of nation."<sup>14</sup>

The political line of BAKSAL at the initial stage was to establish unified, democratic government in the country based on four state principles, to establish an alliance with all the democratic political parties and social organizations, and transform Bangladesh into a powerful democratic base for the building of a unified, independent and democratic state to establish an exploitation free-society. According to Sheikh Mujib,

We are not the rulers of this country. We are to remember it. We are to remember that we are the servants of the country and we have been elected only for their service and we are to devote to serve them.... The system which has been introduced today, is the first of its kind in the history of the world that the members of the Parliament conduct administration locally in this way.<sup>15</sup>

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14. See Bangladesh Observer, 12 August, 1975.

15. For details BAKSAL Chairman's speech at inaugural function of the training course of the District Governor - designate in Dhaka on 21 July, see The Bangladesh Observer, 23rd and 24 July, 1975.

Tactical Measures of the BAKSAL :

The BAKSAL leadership used the following tactics :

- (a) It publicised the BAKSAL ideology and objectives of second Revolution.
- (b) It built up an organisational structure.
- (c) It sought to align the people against the anti-social and anti-state elements, and the very idea of multi-party parliamentary system.
- (d) It encouraged more production in agriculture and factories at all levels.
- (e) It sought to enlist the participation of honest people at all levels for the cause of national unity.
- (f) It took various measures against those who did not believe in the state principles and government policies.<sup>16</sup>

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16. BAKSAL Chairman Sheikh Mujib and other BAKSAL leaders organized many meetings throughout the country to draw peoples attention. The government also used media to publicizing BAKSAL objectives and arranged training for BAKSAL leaders and cadre. In short time they declared BAKSAL EC, CC, DC and Front Organisation Committees. For more production in agriculture they used playing grounds, road side govt. land and other lands with help of students and general people to grow more food and they partly succeeded, groups and individuals and many opposition politicians supported Sheikh Mujib's new system and they joined BAKSAL.



About socialism the BAKSAL Chairman, however, made it abundantly clear that, "our socialism will be no imitation or carbon copy of any particular economic system of this kind". Bangladesh, he emphatically declared, would never hire, borrow or import any 'ism' from any extraneous source. It would not blindly follow any model however successful it might have been in a particular society. Bangladesh, he insisted, would evolve or refashion her own economic system in conformity with her own background, her own physical conditions, her own surroundings, her own history.<sup>17</sup>

Relying on the support of the broad masses of the people, the party carried out democratic task with daring, overcoming all the desperate manoeuvres and obstruction of the traitors and reactionary elements. In view of the prevalent conditions in the country, leading functionaries of the party organizations at all levels organized masses to describe the Party's policy, objectives and programmes and to provide correct analysis of the causes of one party presidential system.

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17. Shafiqul Aziz Mukul, BAKSAL Samprakha Bangobandhu (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1979), p. 66; also see The Bangladesh Observer, 22 June 1975.

In order to unite all the people in all walks of life as a single political force and organize and mobilize them properly in the struggle for the second revolution and national construction, it was imperative to unite them around the charismatic leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Sheikh Mujib and other leaders of BAKSAL provided the people with the idea, theory and method of one party presidential system, its strategy, tactics and creative power. Sheikh Mujib emphasized the differences between the political system of bourgeois parliamentary government and a people's government, as well as the differences between a one party system and a self managing democracy with self-sufficient and self-reliant economy.<sup>18</sup> Sheikh Mujib argued to youth and students :

the life and death of the people of Bangladesh depends on the cooperatives I am going to set up in the villages. You have to wear shorts instead of your trousers and wear lungi instead of Payjamas. You are to go to the villages and work for making those cooperatives successful. We shall need youth and students and shall need everybody.<sup>19</sup>

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18. Razzak, n. 12, pp. 17-36.

19. Sheikh Mujib 26 March Text, The Bangladesh Observer, 30 March 1975.

The socio-economic pattern and the stability of the production relations in every society determine the form and the character of its political system and the degree of its social and political stability.<sup>20</sup> It is the quality of the relationship which gives real content to a socialist society and for this reason, in Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib changed the constitution to establish a new society and declared that he would establish a ceiling on private property and provide opportunity for participation by peasants and workers in the control of production. A people oriented, universal, cheap and constructive education system was also through of.<sup>21</sup>

BAKSAL was expected to direct special attention to the training, assignment and education of party cadres and promulgation of party policy.<sup>22</sup> Most of the Ministers, senior leaders of BAKSAL, Front Organi-

20.

ibid

21. Rahman, n. 12, p. 2.

22. The need for organizing cadres who believed in evolutionary transition to socialism, and who were prepared to work at the grassroot level was, in fact, suggested even by the pre-BAKSAL planning Commission of Bangladesh. They were expected to mobilise, inspire and organise the masses for productive work and to prepare them for accepting changes in income distribution, property relationship and new forms of economic organisations in agriculture, trade and industry. See Nurul Islam, Development Planning in Bangladesh (Dhaka, 1979), p. 31.

sations, specially student organisations, organised many meetings, throughout the country to draw people's attention to the BAKSAL ideology and policy. All government media were used for propagating BAKSAL policy and programme. Government also arranged training for BAKSAL district leaders, district Governors and student cadres. The training list included :

- (1) The historic background and political significance of the new system;
- (2) the importance of state planning and self-reliant economy for socialist construction;
- (3) significance of multipurpose rural cooperatives and its implementation programmes;
- (4) the organisation of National Party and responsibilities of its workers;
- (5) the foreign policy of Bangladesh;
- (6) the population planning and programmes for employment of labour under the second revolution;
- (7) the role of National Party and Administration for discharging the Revolutionary Responsibilities;
- (8) law and order situation;
- (9) party's programmes and disciplines;
- (10) the role of the party in activities for economic development;<sup>23</sup>
- (11) role of Nationalised industries in the self-reliant economy and the res-

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23. See The Bangladesh Observer, 9 August 1975.

possibilities of the district Administration in their management; (12) project implementation and evaluation and the role of the district; (13) process of economic development and framing plans keeping in view the needs of the districts; (14) the salient features of the constitution; (15) relation between national government, parliament and BAKSAL; (16) background of the liberation war and Awami League's role in the national struggle; (17) the historical background of BAKSAL constitution, its aims, objects and programmes; (18) process of economic development in Bangladesh; (19) the role of national government and District Administration; (20) the Jubo League and Student League and the role of youth and student; (21) BAKSAL organizational structure and implementation process of BAKSAL programme; (22) role of JRB, BDR, Army and District Administrators,<sup>24</sup> etc.

The emphasis of the new model was not on the principles of separation of powers and check and balances, rather the emphasis was on unity. Unity was

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24. Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Establishment Department, Jela Governordear Prashikhan Karjukram Karmasuche (Bengali) 21 July - 16 August (Dhaka, 1975).

to be worked out through the mechanism of the party. All key political-administrative position would be held by party members. The theme of unity was explained by Sheikh Kunib in two ways. First, the party would unite all the "educated" leadership groups in a common "pool". Mujib agreed that in a country where the rate of literacy was only 20 per cent and only 5 to 10 per cent were "educated", all the people capable of being leaders should be united for nation building work.<sup>25</sup> Second, unity through party was compared to family unity. Sheikh Mujib said, that the party he had formed was like a family, big enough to embrace the whole nation, that family spirit was strong enough to keep it from disintegrating. Free and frank debate and discussion in the party would reinforce its foundation and not to split up. And so it was necessary to give the members a sense of active participation, to make every one of them feel responsible and competent.

About party membership Sheikh Mujib said, "one cannot get membership just for the asking, no one can

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25. June 21, 1975 Mujib speech, see The Bangladesh Observer, 22 June, 1975; also see, Jahan, n. 6, p. 127.

hang a signboard and claim', I am a member, give me a permit." Nothing like this can happen in a family having an ideological affinity, every member of which is looked upon by him as a brother, as a son. The member will be given membership cards after they get full membership. Each full member will have to donate a fixed part of his income to the party on the rate fixed by the party Executive Committee.<sup>26</sup>

Another tactic used was to organise a large number of people against corrupt people to over run them. Referring to this tactic of using the "human wave" against corrupt people Sheikh Mujib said, "the nation must be united against corruption. It can not be stopped by merely enacting laws without mobilising public opinion". Indeed the problem was not mainly legislative. It called for Augean cleansing of the dens of corruption and social boycott of anti-social elements and immediate change of the system which made corruption respectable by equating in with "privilege". Corruption, like the old system itself, became a way of life. Liquidation of that system was to be a frontal attack on that way of life. He said "if I can eliminate these corrupt elements, 25 to 30 per cent of our misery will be removed."<sup>27</sup>

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26. Rahman, n. 12, p. 11; also see Mukul, n.17, pp. 48-70.

27. Mukul, n. 17, pp. 37-40.

But the new system also might be corrupted unless respect for "value" was restored through self purification which Sheikh Mujib reminded his audience, comes from self-criticism. A popular crusade against corruption therefore, was one of the objectives of the second revolution. He said, "one who evades work is a corrupt element, one who takes bribes, who indulges in smuggling, blackmarketing, boarding is a corrupt element. Those who work against their conscience, those who sell the country to foreign powers are corrupt elements."<sup>28</sup>

A decision to this effect had been taken at a meeting of the Council of Ministers held at Ganobhaban with Sheikh Mujib in chair. It was decided that all the Ministers, Ministers for State, Deputy Ministers and persons enjoying any of these ranks would have to submit to the president statement of their assets and property held in their own names and those of their wives and children.<sup>29</sup>

On July 21, the President removed the Minister of State for Communications Nurul Islam Manzoor from

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28. 26 March Speeches of Sheikh Mujib, see The Bangladesh Observer, 30 March, 1975.

29. See The Bangladesh Observer, 19 February 1975.



the office of the Ministers of State in view of grave charges of corruption against him.<sup>30</sup> He also temporarily suspended his party membership<sup>31</sup> pending enquiry.

Sheikh Mujib said, that those who loved the country, believed in its ideals, accepted the four principles, led honest life - could become members of BAKSAL excepting the foreign agents and, those who illegally took money and those who wanted to create chaos.<sup>32</sup> He added,

We are people of Bangladesh,  
we have the soil, have our golden  
Bengal, we have jute, gas, tea,  
forest, fish and cattle wealth,  
If we can develop these resources,  
Insha-allah our days of misery  
will not remain.<sup>33</sup>

It was made clear that formation of the BAKSAL and declaration of Second Revolution were not the end of the national liberation struggle: it was only beginning of a new stage. The leadership emphasised

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30. Ibid, 22 July 1975.

31. Ibid, 23 July 1975.

32. For details see Sheikh Mujib's 26 March speech, The Bangladesh Observer, 30 March, 1975.

33. Ibid, also see, Mukul, n. 17, pp. 44-45.

that transition from the struggle for national self-determination to struggle for economic and social liberation was not an end in itself, this was meant to lead to the ultimate struggle for socialism.<sup>34</sup>

Decentralised Administration :

Perhaps the most significant measure to be adopted through the BAKSAL was to introduce a decentralised administration in Bangladesh. This was to keep pace with revolutionary thinking of and programmes launched by Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The system had been devised to make a departure from traditional colonial system to bring about certain basic changes in the District and Thana administration. Sheikh Moni pointed out peoples of the developing countries cannot achieve any progress in system devised by the colonial rulers.<sup>35</sup> The district was described as "key administrative units" directly under the control of the government.<sup>36</sup> The law and parliamentary

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34. See Mukul, n. 17, pp. 65-68.

35. Speech of Sheikh Moni; see The Bangladesh Observer, 20 July 1975.

36. An official bill was introduced on 8 July 1975 in the Jatiyo Sangshad for making "basic changes in the concept of district administration" with a provision for appointment of a district Governor to be incharge of general and revenue administration of the area under him. The Bangladesh Observer, 8 July 1975.

affairs Minister Manoranjan Dhar said:

with the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent sovereign state, there arises the necessity for reorganisation of the system of administration, which was colonial in origin and character. The proposed changes seek to enable direct participation of the people in the District and Thana administration and for securing prompt disposal of public business with minimum cost and effort on the part of the people.<sup>37</sup>

The existing districts were to be dissolved and each sub-division would now become a district with a new Administrative Council comprising of representatives from the people, from amongst the members of parliament and government officials. Each Administrative Council would be headed by Governor who would run the local administration.<sup>38</sup> President Sheikh Mujib said :

Those of you who have been connected for long with the rule or administration of this country have seen from experience, have seen through works that our administrative structure is largely detached from the people, real connection with them was not so much...

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37. The Bangladesh Observer, 8 July 1975.

38. Moudud Ahmed, Bangladesh: Era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Dhaka, 1983), p. 245.

a change is necessary whose aim will be to bring about welfare of the people of the country, to remove oppression, injustice and suppression of the people of this country. So that easily and simply the constitutional structure can reach the people directly.<sup>39</sup>

President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 19 June 1975, made it known to the members of the Central Committee of the BAKSAL of the Government's decision to usher in a new administrative system with the creation of Administrative Councils in 61 districts to be headed by district Governors.<sup>40</sup> (see map p. 173 in this chapter).

The President announced the appointment of the district governor on July 16, 1975.<sup>41</sup> The Governors

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39. Khondakor Mohammad Elias (ed.), Bangladesher Samai Biplobed Bangobandhur Darshan (Philosophy of Bangobandhu in Social Revolution of Bangladesh) (Dhaka, 1979), pp. 252-53.
40. The President ordered the creation of total 61 districts including Dhaka Metropolitan district to introduce new administrative system in the country. A Gazette notification issued by the Establishment Division also named the district headquarter and specified the areas comprising police station in the respective district. See, The Bangladesh Observer, 23 June 1975.
41. M.A. Motaleb, "A list of governors", Ministry of Establishment (Dhaka, 28 July 1975) also see, The Bangladesh Observer, 17 July 1975. Out of 61 governors designate 33 were appointed from the amongst the members of Parliament, 13 from

contd..../-

# BANGLADESH

## PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS 1975



designate were to take up their assignments from 1st September 1975. Meanwhile before joining their posts, the governors designate were required to undergo a period of training and fulfil other formalities. The list of Governor's designate is presented in Appendix-V.

The new Administrative Council in the 61 newly created districts was to be headed by governors and manned by the party representatives, MPs, people's representatives and government officials. It was to function directly under the central administration. The new system introduced in the country to ensure well being of the people by removing injustice, corruption and expediting development work.<sup>42</sup> Under the new system the administration was no longer left with a Deputy Commissioner who from the ivory tower of his closely sheltered bureaucratic existence used to handle the problems of the people.

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bureaucracy, one member from army, 5 from former MCA and the rest from other vocations mostly lawyers. The district governor was appointed for the first time by the President but later the governor would be elected by people's votes. See Mikul, n. 17, p. 71.

42. The Bangladesh Observer, 22 July 1975.

The Governors :

According to the District Administration Act, 1975 there was to be a governor for each district who would be called the District Governor. A Governor would be appointed by the President and would hold office during the pleasure of the president and on such terms and conditions as the President might determine.

(a) Qualifications:

- (1) No person would be eligible for appointment as Governor unless he had attained the age of twentyfive years, and
  - (a) was in the service of the Republic and also a member of the BAKSAL, or
  - (b) was member of parliament or of the BAKSAL.
  
- (2) A person would not be eligible for appointment as, or continue to hold the office of Governor if he -
  - (a) was or at any time had been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude;
  - (b) was or at any time had been adjudged insolvent; or
  - (c) had directly or indirectly, by himself or by any partner or employee, any share or interest in any contract with the Government, or with any local authority, or with any industrial

or commercial concern functioning or operating within the district for which appointment was to be or had been made.

- (3) A Governor would not hold any other office of profit construed as preventing a Governor, who was a member of parliament, from continuing to be such member.<sup>43</sup>

(b) Functions :

A Governor would be the chief officer incharge of the general and revenue administration of the district. A Governor would have superintendence and control over all offices and authorities in the district, except the courts and coordinate the activities of such offices and authorities; perform such other functions as might be entrusted to him by the Government or as might be conferred on him by or under any law.

A Governor would be responsible to the Government and would, in the performance of his functions, be

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43. Sayed Mahabur Rahman, Gana Prajathantri Bangla-  
desh Sarkar: The Bangladesh Gazette "Extra-  
ordinary published by authority", 10 July 1975; Dhaka, Act No. VI of 1975. It received the assent of the President on 10 July 1975.



subject to the control and direction of the Government.<sup>44</sup> Governors would have to function in such manner that the people may be benefited by the new system directly. Governors were to mobilise the manpower in their respective areas and enthuse and motivate them towards reaching the objects of development. The Governor was required to work in close cooperation with the local Administration Council and BAKSAL leaders.<sup>45</sup> He had to mobilise public opinion for implementing projects and for effective coordination among different departments in the district. According to A.K.H. Ahsan, the Governors would be the social engineers who had to motivate the people for project implementation.<sup>46</sup>

The Governors would have to look after law and order. The police, BDR, JRB and army posted in/areas <sup>respective</sup> were also under him. While the various military forces would be subject to their respective commands, the

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44. Sheikh Mujib said, "Governors were not the rulers but the servant of the people". (emphasis added).

45. The Bangladesh Observer, 22 July 1975.

46. A.K.H. Ahsan was the Chairman of Project Implementation Bureau, see The Bangladesh Observer, 1 August, 1975.

overall control would be exercised by the Governor. Development programmes, allocation of money for works programmes, family planning, publicity etc. would be the charge of the governor. All persons in the service of the Republic holding any office or post in a district, except a judicial office or post, should be subordinate to the Governor who would exercise general supervision and control over them.<sup>47</sup>

(c) Acting Governor :

At any time when the office of a Governor fell vacant or a Governor was unable to perform the functions of his office on account of absence, illness or any other cause, the District Magistrate would act as Governor and perform the functions of that office.

District Administrative Council :

There was to be a council in each district to be called the "District Administrative Council" except the Dhaka Metropolitan District Administrative Council. A council was to consist of the following members :

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47. Speech of Sheikh Mujib at the inaugural function of the training course of the District Governors - designate at Bangobavan in Dhaka on 21 July 1975 (emphasis added). For details see, The Bangladesh Observer, July 23, 1975.

(a) The Governor, ex-officio; (b) all members of Parliament from the district; (c) the District Magistrate, ex-officio; (d) the Secretary of the district BAKSAL Committee, ex-officio; (e) the Superintendent of Police, ex-officio; (f) one member of the BAKSAL from the district to be nominated by the BAKSAL Chairman; (g) one representative each of the district unit of the JKL, the JSL, the JJL, and the JML to be nominated by the Chairman of the party; (h) one representative of each Thana unit of the BAKSAL to be nominated by the Chairman of the party; (i) the Chairman of each paurashava in the district ex-officio; (j) one representative of the cantonment Board in the district (if any), to be nominated by that Board; (k) one superior officer each of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, BDR, JRB, stationed in the district to be nominated by the chief of staff or as the case may be the Director-General of the Force concerned and (l) the holders of such offices of the Government and local authorities and of other organisations as the government from time to time specify, ex-officio.<sup>48</sup>

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48. The Bangladesh Observer, 23 July 1975. When a member of Parliament from a district held the office of the Prime Minister, or of the Speaker or Deputy Minister, a person nominated by him would be member of the Council in his place.

(a) Functions :

A Council would have the right to discuss, and make recommendations with respect to, matters of administration of the district, supervise and coordinate the execution of all development programmes in the district. A Council with the approval of the Government, was required to prepare development plans for the district and execute them, and exercise such other functions as might be entrusted to it by the Government or as may be conferred on it by or under any law. The recommendations of a Council were to be submitted to the Governor for his consideration and taking such actions thereon as he deemed fit. A Council was to call for such reports and returns from the officers and authorities responsible for executing development programmes in the district if necessary for discharging its functions.

(b) Meetings :

A meeting of the Council would be held at such time and places as may be prescribed.

It was provided that until specific rules were made in this behalf such meetings would be held at such times and places as determined by the Chairman of the

Council. A quorum of atleast seven members was to be maintained at a meeting of the Council. At a meeting of the Council each member would have one vote and in the event of equality of votes the person presiding would have a second or casting vote. If for any reason the Chairman of a Council was unable to attend a meeting, the Secretary of the Council would preside over the meeting. If for any reason the Chairman of a Council was unable to accept any decision of the Council in respect of any matter then he was required to forward such decision to the President with his comments thereon and the decision of the President was to be final. No act or proceeding of a Council would be invalid merely on the ground of existence of any vacancy in, or any defect in the constitution of the Council.

The Secretary of a Council should, subject to the control of its Chairman, be responsible for its day to day administration. A Council would have such employees as would be determined by the government. The employees of a Council would be appointed by the Governor on such terms and conditions as he, with the approval of Government, would determine.

The Government would place at the disposal of the Council funds required for the efficient discharge

of the functions of the Council.<sup>49</sup>

The District Administrative Council was planned in such a manner that there would always be direct people's representation in it. The proposed District Administrative Councils would consist of local MPs, public representative as well as the representatives of different fronts of the local BAKSAL and the government officials. The Administrative Council would naturally have pro-people character due to the existence of close and direct link between the members of this Council and the people.

The new system reflected a unique sense of national unity. In the old administrative system made by the British, there existed a vast gap between the government officials and the public. The government officials always considered themselves as members of the ruling elite, and rated themselves as far superior to any member of the public. This negative attitude of the Government officials in those days ultimately made them completely isolated from the people and

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49. The Government has already sanctioned Taka Seven Crore as non-recurring expenditure for offices, residential quarters and for meeting other emergencies in the new districts.

earned for them the title "Bureaucrats" - an identity uttered with condemnation.

In the new system the entire development outlay of the district would vest in the Administrative Councils starting from food, health, education and irrigation to family planning. All the government offices and departments including that of the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police would remain under Governor's control. The units of Army, JRB, BDR, Navy, Air Force, Police, etc. posted in the district would be under the control of the Governor. In other words, the entire area of planning, implementation, law and order and day to day administration of the district would now vest in the District Governor and the Administrative Council. The District Administrative Council would function under the direct control of the Central Government. The administrative system at Dhaka would also be changed and the bureaucratic system would be replaced by a "people oriented" system.<sup>50</sup> The Secretariat was to be reorganised and red-tapism abolished and the autonomous public utility organisations e.g., the jute corporation, the chemical and

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50. Moudud, n. 38, pp. 245-246.

fertilizer corporation etc. were to come directly under the ministers for speedy implementation of policy decisions. Sheikh Mujib said,

The Secretariat would be reorganised to ensure speedy movement of files for the benefit of the people and the existing corporations would be brought under the direct control of Ministry for quick disposal of work.... I did not want to keep administrative powers confined within the Eden Buildings on the Ganobhavan. I want to reach it gradually to the district, Thana, Union and village levels so that the people can directly get the benefits.<sup>51</sup>

The new administrative system in its decentralised form and was expected to involve the people in development programmes. Money for works programme, food stuff and money for test relief, loan and irrigation projects was to be kept under the control of the Governor. Government Departments would request governors to maintain charts of development allocations. The district governors would be required to display charts to indicate the fund allocations for relief and work programmes as also the distribution of fertilizers.<sup>52</sup>

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51. For details see, Speech of Sheikh Mujib, The Bangladesh Observer, 24 July 1975 and 20 June, 1975; Bangladesh Secretariat called Eden Buildings.

52. For details see, Speech of Sheikh Mujib, The Bangladesh Observer, 24 July, 1975.



As the previous districts were comparatively big in size, equitable and adequate attention could not have been given to all the areas and corners of the districts. Now due to a considerably smaller size of each district, local needs could easily be sorted out by the District Administrative Council and necessary allocations may be made quickly from the local resources. The specific requirements of each district could be conveyed to the central administration if needed. This direct liaison between the district administration and the centre was expected to create an effective cohesion in smooth running of the country's administration.

Thana Council :

There would be an administrative council for each Thana comprising of representatives from the BAKSAL, youth, women, workers, farmers and government officials of different departments. The Thana council would be headed by Thana administrators. The process of creating the Thana council would however, start one year after the District Administrative Council started functioning. The scheme could not be worked out due to the assassination of Sheikh Mujib and later the BAKSAL system was abolished by the Mushtaque government.

Composition of the BAKSAL :

The formation of the BAKSAL doing away with all previously existing parties - some of which were no party in the real sense - created a scope for ascertaining national opinion on different issues. It had also ensured the formation of a national consensus as and when it might be required.

The announcement of the organisational structure of the national party and its constitution generated a new sense of dynamism and enthusiasm in the national life.<sup>53</sup> People at all levels, teachers, students, workers, farmers, doctors, engineers, bureaucrats, technocrats, lawyers, judges, businessmen, journalists and politicians all came forward to reaffirm their abiding faith in the inspiring leadership of Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. They visualized a bright future which they hoped to achieve through their national party BAKSAL. A large section of people in all circles expressed their complete faith in the new system and policies of the BAKSAL and applied for BAKSAL membership.

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53. See The Bangladesh Observer, 10 June 1975.

As will be seen in table IV.1 below from February 1975 to August 1975 in addition to the AL, NAP(M) and CPB members, more than eleven lakh people from different sections applied for BAKSAL membership.

Table IV.1

1. Professors and teachers ...	2,18,039
2. Journalists and Editors ...	641
3. Lawyers and Magistrates ...	251
4. Different party leaders and workers ...	378
5. Different association and organisation members and individuals ...	8,90,605

Source: Newspaper Reports, BAKSAL and Govt. Publication.

More than 317 different organisations, and associations expressed firm confidence in the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and BAKSAL. After announcement of the BAKSAL organisational structure, the defunct AL, NAP(M), CPB leaders formally joined the National Party with most of their members.<sup>54</sup>

54. Most of the Vice-chancellors joined BAKSAL. The editors who applied for membership of BAKSAL were Obidul Huq (Bangladesh Observer) Shamsul contd...../-

BAKSAL leadership was in the hands of the AL, though some of the leaders of the opposition political parties who joined BAKSAL were accommodated in the 115 Central Committee. But none of them were given any role in key executive committee.<sup>55</sup>

So, the BAKSAL was basically a middle class party in terms of the composition of the economic interest groups (see First Chapter AL composition). These included surplus farmers, poor farmers, traders, small industrialists, government servants, teachers, students, workers, doctors, clerks, engineers, technocrats, lawyers and journalists.

Recent evidence shows that these are the dominant classes in Bangladesh society which tend to be the 'intermediate' classes - groups that in the Marxian perspective stands intermediate between capital and labour. the 'intermediate' classes that control state power in Bangladesh are the urban

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contd...

Huda (Morning News), Jahi adul Karim (BSS), Nurul Islam Patwari (Danik Bangla), Ehtesham Haider Chowdhury (Purbo Desh), Shahidul Huq, (Bangladesh Times), Bazlur Rahman (Sangbad), Mizamur Rahman (Defunct BPI), Anwer Hossain Manju (Ittefaq), Individual leaders and workers from NAP(B), Jatiyo League, Jatiyo Gonomukti Union, JSD etc. also joined the BAKSAL.

55. See Jahan, n. 6, p. 120.

middle classes, i.e. civil and military bureaucracy, professionals, businessmen and rich rural peasants, the later having ties of property and kinship with the former.<sup>56</sup> It implies that the intermediate classes dominate the electoral politics of Bangladesh. The leadership of all political parties irrespective of their ideological differences, belonged to the intermediate classes. Most of them came from rich peasant family background or middle class or lower middle class background and are themselves either lawyers or businessmen or teachers. In fact they combine an income from landed property in the rural areas with income from an urban middle class occupation.<sup>57</sup> These groups constituted the majority in the BAKSAL.

The composition as well as the ideology of BAKSAL was highly differentiated. The BAKSAL was a large and loosely-knit organisation in which various sections and classes of the society ranging from the rich land owners to poor peasants, high officials to different political elements found a place. An analysis of its natural class allies, the pattern of its voters, the character of its cadre, members of

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56. Ibid, p. 163.

57. Ibid, p. 164.

parliament, leaders of party's top rank etc. will show that it was essentially a centrist party composed of heterogeneous elements. Despite the heterogeneity of its leadership and its ranks, ideologically the BAKSAL claimed to be a socialist party which sought to establish a socialist society through peaceful means.<sup>58</sup>

#### Rank and Leadership :

The BAKSAL was a pluralist party. Its ranks and leadership was composed of diverse sections and elements. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman undoubtedly held an unchallengeable position in the party. The leadership of the BAKSAL, however, came from among the educated middle class. BAKSAL was a wide association of men of varied political background and social upbringing. These leaders of different social groups, and communities maintained their hold on the party organization.

For the sake of our discussion, we may classify the present leadership of BAKSAL from their political and

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58. For a comparable analysis see, J.D. Sethi, Indian's Static Power Structure (New Delhi, 1969), p. 43.

occupational background, experience of participation in leading political movements, etc.

It will be seen from table IV.2 that the members of the highest executive body of the BAKSAL (Executive Committee), were drawn (80%) from the age group 50-60 years. On the other hand the people from younger groups in age group 30-40 years constituting only 20% came to hold important position. It may be mentioned here that as many as three secretaries were from this later category. It effectively harmonised between the younger and the older groups. Most of the EC members (66.66%) were M.A. degree holders and came from the educated middle class. Of the total EC members, 20% were teachers, 20% lawyers and 13.33% businessmen. The most important point is that the majority of the EC members (40%) were involved in whole time party work. The EC was also represented by a member from the minority community thereby giving a non-communal and secular colour to the organisation. Most of the EC members (93.33%) were from defunct Awami League. These members were associated with political activities and movements, for a long time. About 46.66% of the members were involved in pre-Pakistani movement, about 79.99% were involved in the language movement of 1952, about 93.33% in Anti-Constitution movement in

1962, about 93.33% in the 6 point movement in 1966 and almost all of them were involved in the liberation war of 1971. The bulk of the EC members (65%) held high positions in the government, an 33.33% were MPs. This highlights the fact that the EC members were associated with both the party and government affairs.

The Central Committee of the BAKSAL, the most important body of the BAKSAL structure also had representation from the bureaucracy (17.39%) see table IV.3. Even the members of Defence Services including the Army, Navy, Air Force, BDR, JRB and the Police were also members (4.3%). The CC was constituted mostly from people of educated middle class. These people, because of professional and political reasons, were inhabitants of the urban areas. Though there was a large number of MPs in the CC (26.95%), about 2.65% of them were top educationists of the universities, about 2.65% were editors of various newspapers. These groups represented about one third of the CC members. One may find the CC had a majority of defunct Awami League members (67.82%), other parties also had their representatives in it. Representatives other defunct parties included members



from NAP (M) (4.30%), two from CPB and one each from CPB (L) and DJL. In keeping with the national policy of the secularism, the CC also had representation from various minority groups like the Hindus (4.30%), the Buddhist (0.86%), the Christians (0.88%). About 4.30% of the members were women.

The data in table IV.4 shows that most of the district governors were from the age group 45-55. Most of them were graduated (54.82%). Though the majority of them (56.63%) were political personalities (MPs), the experienced and honest bureaucrats (20%) were also made district governors. Most of the district governors were from the educated middle class - lawyers (35.84%), bureaucrats (20%), and businessmen (9.43%). Like the earlier groups the majority of the district governors were city dwellers. Even the social workers (5.66%), and tribal chiefs (3.77%) were also included. Table IV.4 shows that the governors had long experience in political movements - the pre-Pakistani movement (13.27%) 1952 language movement (33.96%), 1962 movement (67.73%), 1966, six point movement (71.69%) and the liberation war of 1971 (67.73%). Some of the district governors (54.82%) were involved in student politics earlier. The post of the district

governor was also above religious consideration. Though the total Buddhist population of Bangladesh was less than one percent about 3.77% of them were from this religion.

Most of the MPs elected during the 1973 general elections joined the BAKSAL. Table IV.5 shows that the majority of the MPs came from various groups - lawyers (25%), businessmen (23.67%), farmers (14.84%). It is interesting to note that in a country where maximum annual salary is fixed at Tk. 24,000 the MPs (68%) earned more than this amount. Most of the MPs were associated with various movement - about 81.15% of them participated in the liberation war. While about 41.82% had more than 16 years of organisational experience. In the districts, about 70.70% and in the sub-division about 62.10% were involved in party work. It shows that a large proportion of the MPs were involved more in district and sub-divisional politics than at the centre.

All the tables indicate that the majority of the BAKSAL leadership came from the educated urban middle class, they earned a lot and had long political experience. It was secular in character. Though many leaders were above 50 years of age, the representation

Table IV.2

(EC 15 Members, year 1975)\*

State Position	Total	%age	Education	Total	%age
President	1	6.66	Ph.D.	1	6.66
Vice-President	1	6.66	M.R.	10	66.66
Minister	7	46.66	Graduate	3	20.00
Speaker	1	6.66	Not known	1	6.66
MPs*	5	33.33			
<u>Party Position</u>			<u>Occupation</u>		
Chairman	1	6.66	Teaching	3	20.00
Secretary Gen.	1	6.66	Lawyer	3	20.00
Secretaries	3	20.00	Business	2	13.33
Members (EC)	10	66.66	Journalist	1	6.66
			Whole time party workers	6	40.00
<u>Age</u>			<u>Former Party Position</u>		
30-40 years	3	20.00	AL	14	93.33
40-50 years	5	33.33	Not party affiliated	1	6.66
50-60 years	7	46.66			
<u>Religion</u>			<u>Experience of Participation in Leading Political Movements</u>		
Muslim	14	93.33	Pre-Pakistani Movement	7	46.66
Hindu	1	6.66	1952 Language Movement	12	79.99
			1962 Anti-Constitution Movement	14	93.33
			1966 Six point Movement	14	93.33
			1971 Movement	15	100.00
			Liberation war (Sheikh Mujib in jail)	14	93.33

Source: Newspaper reports, BAKSAL and government publication Bangladesh Jatiyo Sangshad, Bangladesh Jatiyo Sangshad Sadasyaden Jibor Bitantra (Dhaka, Feb. 1975) and my personal interview.

\* Out of 15 BAKSAL EC members 11 members were MPs, but in table IV.2 only five are shown as because the other six included as Minister's and the speaker.

Table IV.3

BAKSAL Central Committee 115, Year 1975

<u>Details</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%age</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%age</u>
<u>State Position</u>			<u>Party Position</u>		
President	1	0.86	Chairman	1	0.86
Vice-President	1	0.86	Sec. Gen.	1	0.86
Minister	16	13.91	Secretaries	3	2.65
Prime-Minister	1	0.86	CC Members (inc. 15 EC)	110	95.65
Speaker	1	0.86	<u>Religion</u>		
Chief Whip	1	0.86	Maglim	108	93.91
MPs	31	26.95	Hindu	5	4.30
State-Minister	9	7.82	Buddhist	1	0.86
Deputy Speaker	1	0.86	Christian	1	0.86
Others	53	46.08	<u>Occupation</u>		
<u>Sexual Position</u>			Civil Servants	20	17.39
Men	110	95.65	Defence service	5	4.30
Women	5	4.30	Editors	3	2.65
<u>Former Party Position</u>			Educationists	3	2.65
AL	78	67.82	Physicians	2	1.79
NAP (M)	5	4.30	Others	82	71.34
CPB	2	1.79			
BGP (L)	1	0.86			
BJL	1	0.86			
Others	28	24.30			

Source: Bangladesh Jatiyo Sangshad Sadasyader Jibon Brittanto, TBO, 7 June 1975, BAKSAL and govt. publication, and my personal interviews.

Table IV.4

BAKSAL District Governors (total 53), Year 1975

<u>Details</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%age</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%age</u>
<u>Age</u>			<u>Religion</u>		
60-65 years	1	1.88	Muslim	50	94.33
55-60 years	1	1.88	Buddhist	2	3.77
50-55 years	12	22.64	Hindu	1	1.88
45-50 years	19	35.84	<u>Part<del>y</del> Position</u>		
40-45 years	9	16.98	BAKSAL CC	1	1.88
35-40 years	5	9.43	members		
30-35 years	4	7.54	BAKSAL Dist.		
25-30 years	1	1.88	Committee Chief	5	9.43
Not known	1	1.88	<u>Occupation</u>		
<u>Education</u>			Lawyer	19	35.84
MA	13	24.52	Mukter	2	3.77
Graduated	29	54.82	Govt. Servant	10	18.86
Intermediate	4	7.54	Journalist	1	1.88
LMF	1	1.88	Businessmen	5	9.43
Matriculation/ Entrance	2	3.77	Tax Consultant	1	1.88
Not known	4	7.54	Tribe Chief	2	3.77
<u>State Position</u>			Others	13	24.52
DC	7	13.27	<u>Experience of Participation in Leading Political Movements</u>		
ADC	1	1.88	Pre-Pak Mov.	7	13.27
Deputy Secretary	1	1.88	1952 Lang. Mov.	18	33.96
MPs	30	56.63	1962 Anti-Con- stitution Mov.	36	67.73
Others	14	26.41	1966 Six Point Mov.	38	71.69
<u>Former Party or Govt. or other organisation Position</u>			1971 Liberation war	32	67.73
AL	38	71.69	Student politics background	29	54.82
NA P (M)	1	1.88			
Army	1	1.88			
Bureaucrats	10	18.86			
Social Workers	3	5.66			

Source: Newspaper Report, BAKSAL and Government Publication and my personal interviews.

Table IV.5

(Parliament members of 1973 Total 283; Most of them join BAKSAL IN 1975)

Occupational Background of the MPs

	Lawyer	Business- men	Land- lords	Farmer	Ser- vice	Tea- cher	Doctor	Politi- cians
MPs	75	67	8	42	2	28	15	35
1973	25%	23.67%	2.82%	14.84%	0.70%	9.89%	5.30%	12.36%

(Source: Reunaq Jahan Survey; See her books Bangladesh Politics: Problem and Issues, p. 99).

Annual Income of the MPs

Year	Less than Tk. 20,000	Tk. 20,000/- to Tak 30,000/-	Tk. 30,000/- to Tk. 50,000/-	Tk. 50,001 and above
1973	91	90	69	33
MPs	32.15%	31.80%	24.38%	11.66%

Experience of Participation in  
Leading Political Movement

Year	Pre-Pak. Movement	1952 Lang. Movement	1962 Anti- Constitution Movement	1966 Six point Movement	1968-69 Anti- Ayub Mov.	1971 Libera- tion war
1972 MPs	79	163	122	185	203	224
%age	28.62	59.05	44.20	67.02	73.55	81.15

Political Background of MPs (1973)

Years of experience with Party organization	Experience of levels of party Office Holding								
	Yrs. 0-5	5-10	11-15	16 & above	Union level	Sub-Div. level	Dist. level	Natio- nal level	Metropo- litan level
Total	69	72	12	110	87	159	181	72	34
%age	26.28	27.37	4.86	41.82	33.98	62.10	70.70	28.12	13.28

Source: Reunaq Jahan's Survey, see her books Bangladesh Politics Problems and Issues, pp. 100, 108, and Bangladesh Jatiyo Sangshad, Bangladesh Jatiyo Sangshad Sadasvader Jibon Bitantra (Bengali) (Dhaka, 1975).

of the younger group was also impressive. On the other hand, the experienced bureaucrats and members of all classes had their representation in the BAKSAL leadership. This was designed to make expeditions the overall development of the country. There were contradictions also. Though it envisaged an exploitation free society, there was the possibility of class antagonism also as the members were drawn from the middle class and upper middle class. However, because of their long experience in political movements, they also imbibed the qualities of sacrifice and service.

By-Elections held Under BAKSAL :

The first by-election under the BAKSAL system to the Jatiyo Sangshad in Bangladesh on the basis of Universal adult franchise - attracted much attention. Eight vacancies were created in the Jatiyo Sangshad either by the death of a member or refusal to join national party or resignation from the Jatiyo Sangshad by some members. Two seats were vacated by the President and the Vice-President. Under the new system the BAKSAL Chairman Sheikh Mujibur Rahman nominated several persons as the candidates of BAKSAL to contest the ensuing by-election in different constituencies.

Under the new system whoever of these candidates polled highest votes in the by-election, was to be elected member of the Jatiyo Sangshad. The results of by-election :

(1) Commilla-25 : Sarajul Islam Patwari was elected in the constituency in the by-election held on 20 July 1975. According to election commission, Sarajul Islam Patwari bagged 12,466 votes and followed by his nearest rival Prof. Shamsuddin Ahmed, who got 7,345 votes. Five candidates were nominated by BAKSAL for this constituency.

(2) Rajshahi-11 : Md. Mohsin Advocate had been elected in this constituency in the by-election held on 20 July 1975. Md. Mohsin polled 14,102 votes keeping behind his rival who polled 13,829 votes.<sup>59</sup>

(3) Mymensingh-25 : Dewan Shajahan Yar Chowdhury was elected. He polled 11,736 votes while his nearest rival Najamuddin Talukdar polled 6,716 votes. Other candidates who contested were, Md. Abdul Quddus, Dr. Zahiruddin Ahmed.

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59. The Bangladesh Observer, 21 July 1975.



(4) Bakergani-17 : Nurul Islam defeated his rival Md. Jahangir Kabir, Mr. Islam polled 15,876 votes while Jahangir Kabir polled 13,057 votes. Other candidates were, Md. Rasul Sikder, Abdul Barek Howildar.

(5) Kushtia-4 : Abul Hussin Tarun was declared elected to the Jatiyo Sangshad by-election held on 23 March 1975. Abul Hussain Tarun one of the three candidates polled 26,415 votes while his nearest candidate Abdul Bari received 13,461 votes and Abul Kalam got 9053 votes.<sup>60</sup>

(6) Sylhet-6: Ashraf Ali polled 10,527 votes and nearest rival Lutfar Rahman polled 8,553 votes. Ashraf Ali defeated three candidates. Other candidates were Dewan Nurul Hossain Chanchal and Raunak Ahmed Chowdhury.<sup>61</sup>

(7) Dhaka-XII: Mohammed Hanif, the lone candidate to the Jatiyo Sangshad by-election had been declared elected uncontested by the Returning Officer on 3 April 1975, according to Bangladesh Election Commission.<sup>62</sup>

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60. Ibid, 24 March 1975.

61. Ibid, 22 April 1975.

62. Ibid, 4 April 1975.

(8) Mymensingh-28 : BAKSAL nominated Md. Abdur Sattar, Md. Asharafuddin and Syed Wahidul Islam (the result not known).

The smooth running of the above by-elections held in the eight districts of Bangladesh (old district) under the new system with multiple candidature from the only national party, the BAKSAL indicated popular acceptance of the new system.

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## Chapter - V

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### THE AFTERMATH : CHAIN OF REACTION

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#### Reaction: Phase I :

From what has been discussed in the previous chapters it becomes clear that the new system introduced under the BAKSAL package would have destabilised certain traditionally privileged, powerful social groups, namely, the big land owners, the bureaucrats, the military personnel, the beneficiaries of the existing judicial system and the emergent middle class (mainly traders) thriving basically on corrupt practices. In brief, the proposed changes threatened all these groups which had developed a stake in the existing system for continued self-promotion both in terms of power and material gains. The new system which was claimed to be the instrument for achieving the objectives of a socialist economic order created a fear psychosis among these influential social groups and activated them in reaction. In this they were reinforced with the anti-national elements who had opposed the liberation of Bangladesh and/or who had

reservations about the four basic principles of state policy, namely, nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. Although conclusive evidence is yet to be established, several circumstantial evidence strongly indicate collusion of extra-societal conspiratorial elements with these groups - which ultimately brought about the assassination of Sheikh Mujib and others in August 1975 followed by killing of four prominent leaders of Bangladesh in November 1975.

On August 15, 1975 elements of the Bangladesh Army attacked the residence of President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, killing him and his family members present there. Two young army Majors Farook and Rashid led the coup to overthrow Mujib. The coup was carried out by about 20 army officers of the rank of Major, Captain and Lieutenant and 200/250 Jawans. But the leadership was in the hands of about six officers, all of whom were Majors. Most of them belonged to 2nd Field Artillery and Bengal Lancers. They used more than 20 tanks to carry out their operation.<sup>1</sup>

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1. P.B. Sinha, Armed Forces of Bangladesh, IDSA Papers (New Delhi, 1979), p. 15; also see Jyoti Sengupta, Bangladesh in Blood and Tears (Calcutta, 1981), p. 53.

Mujib's close supporters and relatives were also assassinated in their residences. The brutal assassination of Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, his family and close associates has shocked the whole world. Mujib, his wife, three sons, two newly married daughters-in-law were butchered, even the ten year old son, Russel was not spared. Sheikh Moni and his pregnant wife, Abdur Rab Serneabat and his family members, Col. Jamil<sup>2</sup> and others were also bayoneted. While the killings were going on, one task force went to fetch Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed from his residence to the Radio station.<sup>3</sup> A new regime under Moshtaque Ahmed was established. Curfew and Martial law was proclaimed throughout the country. This massacre can only be compared with the gruesome murders committed by the military-fascist junta of Chile.

The conspirators in fact had already started a sinister game for undoing Bangladesh's independence, and with this end in view had already begun a villification campaign against Sheikh Mujib and other

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2. Col. Jamil who was incharge of the security of President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had arrived at the scene on receiving news regarding the attack and was killed in front of Bangobandhu's residence.
  3. Hindustan Times, 23 August, 1975.

progressive leaders through a section of patronised press and CIA recruited journalists.<sup>4</sup> Such elements thrived because "they were encouraged by the hostile attitude of the United States and China, the two newly weds, who never forgave him [Sheikh Mujib] for dismembering and fatally weakening their protege, Pakistan."<sup>5</sup>

Besides Lawrence Lifschultz's well known account regarding American involvement,<sup>6</sup> there were press reports in Bangladesh, that US experts on Indonesia and Chile were frequently seen with anti regime elements in Dhaka. These elements later supported the assassinations of 1975, and the subsequent politico-economic changes. Further, in London, Mecca and West Germany centres were established to guide and assist the disruptionists. One Pir Syed Asmat Ali formed a United Azad East Pakistan

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4. For a list of such journalists see Sengupta, n.1, p. 133. They include Amanullah of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, Enayetullah Khan (founder editor of weekly Holiday who later became editor of the Government owned Bangladesh Times), Moinul Hossain and Anwar Hossain of Itefaq, and Nurul Islam Patwary of Dainik Bangla.
5. Premen Addy, "Sheikh Mujib: Man and Leader", in Abdul Matin (ed.), Tribute to Sheikh Mujib, (London, 1980), p. 14.
6. Lawrence Lifschultz, Bangladesh the Unfinished Revolution (London, 1979), pp. 136-37.

Government in London and pamphlets in his support were being printed in West Germany and widely circulated in Bangladesh.<sup>7</sup>

Without going into further reports indicating the US role, it can be safely presumed that the US, with its record of subversive activities in the Third World, could not have remained uninvolved in those activities which were aimed against the new system introduced by Sheikh Mujib because at the time the "three most hated men" on Kissinger's "foreign enemies" list were Allende, Thieu and Mujib.<sup>8</sup>

Premier Chou-en-Lai had forecast that the fall of Dhaka in 1971 was only the beginning of the problems for Bangladesh. Its strong opposition to Bangladesh's entry to the U.N. indicated the hostile attitude of China towards Bangladesh under Sheikh Mujib,<sup>9</sup> She tried to spread her influence through various Maoist

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7. S.R. Chakravarti and others, Turmoil and Political Change in South Asia (Jaipur, 1978), p. 44.
  8. Roger Morris, Uncertain Greatness: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy (London, 1977).
  9. G.W. Chowdhury, "Bangladesh Coup and counter coups: International Implications" in Orbis, Vol. XIV, Winter 1976, p. 15. Also see, B. Rahmatulla, The Emergence of Bangladesh: Its Impact on Indo-American Relation (Delhi, NA), p. 46.

groups, pro-Pakistani elements, etc. in Bangladesh. China and Pakistan made concerted allegations that Bangladesh had become a Manchuquo type satellite of India. Press reports in Bangladesh often mentioned Chinese arms help to left adventurists in Bangladesh.<sup>10</sup>

Pakistan President Z.A. Bhutto prophesied in 1972 that Pakistan and Bangladesh would be reunited in a federation within the next ten or fifteen years.<sup>11</sup>

Besides, propaganda against the Mujib government "were spread by a section of the western media without investigation."<sup>12</sup>

The Military in Bangladesh with 28,000 personnel repatriated from Pakistan in 1973<sup>13</sup> also joined the fray through machinations of a group in the Awami

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10. For details see Chakravarti, n. 7, p. 44. Some members of the Purbha Bangla Sarbahara Party also admitted this to the present writer in Dhaka jail in 1978.
11. See account of Oriana Pallac's interview with Bhutto in The Bangladesh Papers (Lahore, n.d.), p. 296.
12. For details, see Matin, n. 5, p. 37.
13. P.B. Sinha, n. 1, pp. 2-4.



League. This group managed to get the army involved in recovery of weapons, anti-smuggling and anti-blackmarketeering operations, etc., and in the process got some district AL leaders arrested on allegation or anti-social activities. When no action was taken against the alleged culprits for want of proof - the army men felt cheated. Thus an open rift between the armed forces and the government was deliberately created and later it was a few disgruntled army men that formed the core of the assassination plot which was hatched to nip in the bud the new system which when fully implemented would have tilted the balance against various beneficiary groups of the old system.

It is generally believed that the clandestine activities of the conspirators had not remained totally unnoticed. Sheikh Mujib Rahman himself told journalist Gaffar Chowdhury "a bullet is chasing me."<sup>14</sup>

If Sheikh Mujib's assassination was the outcome of the failure of his government - as claimed by many -

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14. Vide Gaffar Chowdhury's letter to Kadir Siddique in dated 7 Feb., 1976.

this should have taken place in 1974 when the state of the economy and law and order situation was far worse. From the timing of the assassination it would appear that forces of reaction were unnerved and felt that once the new system was put into operation, it would be difficult for them to write it off. So a preemptive action was planned to kill the Bangobandhu and thus put an end to the experiment with the new system. They must have realised that in a few days time "districts would have been handed over to political governors and a coup at the centre might have provoked a challenge from the districts."<sup>15</sup>

According to Lifschultz, some Bangladesh sources claim that Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed, Mahbubul Alam Chashi (Foreign Secretary in Provisional Government) and Taheruddin Thakur (Minister of Information and Broadcasting in Mujib Ministry) had been jointly planning to overthrow Mujib for a year or so.<sup>16</sup> The present writer has also heard from many sources that Awami League ministers Shah Moazzam Hossain, Obaidur Rahman, Bacchu Karim (businessman) and Mainul Hossain(ed.

15. Rounaq Jahan, Bangladesh Politics: Problems and Issues (Dhaka, 1980), p. 136.

16. Lifschultz, n. 6, p. 103. Coup leader Major Rashid and Major Farook stated that they were planning to overthrow Mujib since 1973, see Rashid and Farook, Muktir Path (Beng.) (Dhaka, 1984), pp. 71-72.

Ittefaq) were co-conspirators. Infact Obaidur Rahman on 14 August 1975 remarked in front of the present writer that "Mujib will not be anything from tomorrow" - the import of this statement was realised only after killing had taken place the day after. Information relating to some secret meetings in Dhaka, Coxis Bazar, Comilla, etc. were relayed to Sheikh Mujib. But Mujib overlooked them as rumour since he thought that he was too dear to the people of Bangladesh to be killed by them. And in fact it was not the people who took any part in the killing.

Lifschultz claims that Zia was secretly approached by representative of the Mushtaque group including Chashi for his support. Zia reportedly agreed that there was need for a change but refused to commit himself to any action at that stage. Mushtaque's circle carefully continued to search for the necessary military contacts which could carry through the action. Contact was made with Major Rashid and Major Farook.<sup>17</sup> According to Rashid and Farook they met - Major General Zia on 20th March 1975 with their proposal for military action to effect a 'political change'. They told him "we the

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17. Lifschultz, n. 6, p. 103.

junior officers have already worked it out, we want your support and your leadership." Although Zia did not formally offer his support to them he very significantly said, "I am sorry, I would not like to get involved in anything like that. If you want to do something, the junior officers should do it themselves."<sup>18</sup> This certainly indicated Gen. Zia's moral supports to the conspiracy.

It has been rightly pointed out, that if the assassination of 15 August was the result of an army uprising then it was natural that Ziaur Rahman was actively associated with the uprising because he was then Deputy Chief of Army Staff and was at the Dhaka Cantonment. This implies that a successful army action took place under the leadership of six ex-Majors with the help of only one hundred and fifty sepoy. All this took place at time when the highest ranking army officers - the chief, Deputy Chief, Brigade Commander etc., were stationed in Dhaka. But Zia has repeatedly stated both inside and outside the country that he was not involved in the killing of Mujib. It has been rightly questioned whether or not such an uprising was possible without the knowledge of the officers

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18. Sengupta, n. 1, pp. 70-71.

concerned. What were the rest of the armed forces were doing at that time. If they against the uprising why was there no resistance?<sup>19</sup>

According to Rounaq Jahan, "the timing of the coup seems to have been determined by two factors. First, the coup leaders wanted to move before September 1, 1975 because after the date districts would have been handed over to Political Governors.... Secondly on August 15 Mujib was scheduled to visit Dhaka University Campus to receive the university faculty and staff's application for membership to BAKSAL. The coup leaders mobilized troops by using the pretext of extra security measures to guard Mujib on the Dhaka University campus. They felt that by killing Sheikh Mujib they would be able to get support from Dhaka University - a stronghold of opposition to the regime."<sup>20</sup>

On 14 August 1975 some miscreants, obviously, agents of the coup leaders exploded some grenades in the Dhaka University campus and also tried to hoist a

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19. Ismail Mohammed, "Bangladesh Samajik Abosthan-Rajnitik Jatilata", in Mujib Banglar Ghare Ghare, Bengali Souvenir (Dhaka, 1980), pp. 39-40.

20. Jahan, n. 15, pp. 36-37.

Pakistani flag there.<sup>21</sup> When these were reported to Sheikh Mujib, he is understood to have said, "Many efforts have been made and are being made to deviate me from the path I have chosen. They do not want that Bangladesh should become self-reliant and stand on its own feet. And with the implementation of the BAKSAL programme Bangladesh would be a happy and prosperous nation. Then it would not be necessary to go with a begging bowl to them. Consequently they also would not be able to show temper to us. How can they tolerate this? They know that the people are with me and therefore instead of going to the people they want to clandestinely sabotage my programme."<sup>22</sup>

Raunag Jahan's analysis (cited earlier) and Mujib's apprehensions proved correct also in the light of Col. Rashid's claim that if Mujib had remained alive it would have been difficult for them to control the situation because Mujib had much more political experience.<sup>23</sup>

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21. Present writer was eye-witness of these incidents.
22. Sheikh Shahidul Islam as reported in weekly Khabor (Dhaka, March 1979).
23. "World Action" interview of Farook and Rashid by Mascarenhas. ITV/Granada Television, 2 August 1976 cited in Sengupta, n. 1, p. 69.

The motivation behind the coup becomes very clear by certain changes introduced by the Mushtaque government which was being steered by a so-called 'Revolutionary council' manned by the ex-majors and operating from within the walls of the Bangobaban.

The army officers who had been repatriated from Pakistan and whose commitment to the independence of Bangladesh was always in doubt, and whom even Sheikh Mujib, who had been criticised for pardoning local collaborators - had kept away from key posts, were given important assignments. To illustrate a few: Maj. Gen. Khalilur Rahman was appointed Chief of Defence Services, Brig. H.M. Ershad (later promoted Maj. Gen) was appointed Deputy Chief of the Army, Brig. (now Maj. Gen.) Kazi Golam Dastgir was appointed Director General of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). The Cabinet Secretary Tofeque Imam, a Mujibnagar hand was dismissed and arrested, and was replaced by Shafiul Azam a collaborator. Mahbub Alam Chashi, Mushtaque's accomplice in his earlier attempt to sabotage the Liberation war was also given a very important position.<sup>24</sup>

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24. For details see Communist Party Publication: Reaction Strikes in Bangladesh (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 41-43.

The real reason behind the coup became self-explanatory when the new government abandoned the new system introduced under the BAKSAL package. On 28 August 1975 the proposed administrative system of districts under Governors was cancelled by a Presidential ordinance. Another ordinance issued on 30 August 1975 banned formation of political parties and two days later the one party system was abolished and thus formation of the BAKSAL became null and void.<sup>25</sup>

Earlier, the anti-liberation leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islami and other Islamic Fundamentalist Parties still in prison were freed.<sup>26</sup>

The Rakkhi Bahini also was disbanded by an ordinance issued on August 30.<sup>27</sup> It was announced on October 5, that the President had promulgated an ordinance for the absorption of the members of the Rakkhi Bahini into the Bangladesh Army.<sup>28</sup>

Reactions to the August Coup :

The Iraqi Communist Party paper Tarik-Al-Shaab

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25. Keesing Contemporary, October 13-19, 1975, p. 27382.

26. Ibid, Oct. 8, 1976, p. 27989.

27. See Keesing, Oct. 13-19, 1975, p. 27382.

28. Ibid.



condemned the overthrow of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman government as "a reactionary coup to liquidate progressive achievements."<sup>29</sup>

Daily World, the USA Communist Party paper gave the news of the coup under a heading, "Pro-US military coup in Bangladesh" and pointed out that Khondokar Moshtaque Ahmed was a "pro-US rightist."<sup>30</sup>

The French Communist Party daily L'Humanite under a four-column headline "Pro-American coup in Bangladesh" declared that after the attempts of neo-fascist and pro-American bid to capture power in India were frustrated by the measures taken some weeks ago by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Kissinger can have a small satisfaction. L'Humanite added, "it is impossible not to recall in this context the recent revelations about CIA plans to organise and carry out assassinations of political leaders in various countries. What is there not to think that Bangladesh is a victim of the policy of "destabilisation" practised by American imperialism."<sup>31</sup>

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29. See New Age, August 24, 1975.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

The Secretariat of the World Peace Council in a statement on the situation in Bangladesh issued in Helsinki on August 19, 1975 said: "The events in Bangladesh have caused great concern to all progressive, anti-imperialist and peace-loving forces. The military coup against the government headed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led his country to freedom, is yet another instance of the imperialist - CIA conspiracy to "destablise" governments which stand opposed to US imperialist policy of war and aggression. The reported assassination of Bangladesh leaders... follow the familiar pattern of CIA - imperialist engineered coups everywhere."<sup>32</sup>

Reaction to the coup in Pakistan were initially partly influenced by reports that the official name of the country had been changed from "the people's Republic of Bangladesh to 'The Islamic Republic' of Bangladesh although on August 1975 Dhaka Radio referred to <sup>the</sup> country by its old name of "The People's Republic of Bangladesh."

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32. Ibid.

Announcing recognition on August 15 the Pakistan Prime Minister Z.A. Bhutto said, that as a spontaneous gesture Pakistan would immediately dispatch a "gift" of 50,000 tons of rice and 15,000,000 yards of cloth to Bangladesh, and he made "an earnest appeal to the Third World and to member countries of the Islamic Conference to recognize the 'Islamic Republic' of Bangladesh. A Karachi radio broadcast on August 17, said: The fith of the new Bangladesh government in Islamic ideology is the most important thing, and on that basis Pakistan immediately recognized the Islamic Republic of Bangladesh."<sup>33</sup>

India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressed "shock and sorrow" on the bloody coup against Mujibur Rahman's government in Bangladesh in August 1975 and India officially stated that "we cannot remain unaffected."<sup>34</sup>

The coup-makers had immediately contacted Col. (Retd.) Abu Taher.<sup>35</sup> He had a discussion with

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33. Kessing, October 13-19, 1975. In 1974 Pakistan government had not send any gift to the famine affected Bangladesh.
34. S.D. Muni, "Systemic and Strategic Divergence", Mainstream, March 17, (New Delhi, 1984), p.4.
35. Col. Taher an army Major in Pakistan Army was posted in West Pakistan in 1971. He escaped and joined the Mukti Bahini and lost one leg while fighting valiently. Later he formed the Gana-bahini - the underground wing of the JSD was responsible for bringing Gen. Zia to the fore-front during the November uprising in 1975.

Mushtaque in the presence of Major Rashid, Major Dalim, Maj. Gen. Khalilur Rahman (the then BDR Chief) and Taheruddin Thakur. At this meeting he proposed abrogation of the constitution, declaration of Martial Law, release of all political prisoners and formation of all party democratic government excluding the BAKSAL. But he had no further involvement with them because "it became clear to me that whole game was backed by the United States of America and Pakistan. I also understood that Khondokar Mushtaque, backed by a faction of the upper echelon of the Awami League was directly involved in the killing of Sheikh Mujib. This group, it was also clear, had a pre-determined course set for themselves...."

"The Mustaque government could not offer a better alternative than the Mujib government. The only change that occurred was that the country, from having been under the hegemony of Indo-Soviet influence, passed over to the hegemony of American imperialism."<sup>36</sup>

Taher's own account reveals that the JSD was not so much against authoritarianism as against the

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36. For details see, "Taher's Testimony" dated 1st November 1976, in Lifschultz, n. 6, pp. 81-82.

BAKSAL package because while opposing BAKSAL as an instrument of authoritarian rule it advocated martial law and abrogation of the constitution. Interestingly, the Mushtaque government adopted similar measures. According to Abdur Razzak then Bangladesh Ambassador in Sweden: "Mushtaque was thus an ideal figure around whom a foreign-backed intervention could take shape, particularly as his own religious fanaticism militated against the secular base of his country's independence movement.... Indeed, the principal actors in the blood-stained drama of August 1975 have subsequently admitted that the coup had received his prior approval.

"The events immediately following the coup indicate the hand of foreign intrigue: It was Washington that first announced its success even before it had been completed. At the same time Pakistan Radio announced that Bangladesh had declared itself an 'Islamic Republic' and that Islamabad had given it instant recognition. In fact, no declaration about an 'Islamic Republic' was ever made from Dhaka, and, considering the distance and time-differences between Islamabad and Dhaka, one cannot understand how such an announcement could be made by the state controlled

Pakistani Radio, unless its government was sticking to a previously arranged political script. This certainly seems to have been the case, for Lt. Colonel Farooq who led the coup, said in a signed statement that Mushtaque and the commander in-chief Ziaur Rahman knew of his plans and had agreed formally to turn the country into an 'Islamic Republic!'"<sup>37</sup>

According to Revolutionaries and National Liberation Army of Bangladesh, an underground organization, "The Sponsors of the caucus have tried to cover their crime by raising a cry that the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family was an act of personal vendetta. But the dirty acts and measures of the regime ever since 15th August, have proved conclusively that the motive of the killing was anti-liberation, anti-Bangladesh, anti-people, anti-revolutionary. It was a bid for restoration of colonial rule which was overthrown in 1971."<sup>38</sup>

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37. See Abdur Razzak, Foreign Powers and the Bangladesh, BAKSAL Pamphlet (London, Jan. 1977). Abdur Razzak (Former Ambassador) resigned his post in Feb. 1976 in protest against both the military coup and the assassination of Sheikh Mujib and his political challenges.

38. See, Let US Overthrown the Counter-Revolutionary Regime in Bangladesh a typed Pamphlet published on behalf of Revolutionaries and National Liberation Army of Bangladesh, Dhaka, June 1977.

Bangabir Kadir Siddique told the present writer, "Some international publicity media have tried to explain Bangobandhu's killing as a spill-over of nepotism, corruption and misuse of power by his family members. But never for a moment we have believed that these were the reasons for Bangobandhu's assassination.... From the very beginning we have been saying that in small undeveloped countries such incidents do not take place without the involvement of great powers. Only now others are admitting this."<sup>32</sup>

Reaction Phase II:

The Jatiya Mukti Bahini (JMB) :

The post BAKSAL successive military and military-civil governments under a presidential system has in no way minimised the economic misery, political uncertainty and instability in the country. They have thrown to the wind the ideals and objectives for which the people of Bangladesh fought for decades. Now the state power is held by the affluent section of the bourgeoisie which is bent on keeping in power a ruling clique which is sympathetic so and completely dependent

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39. Present writer interview with Kadir Siddique in December 1983.

on the neo-imperialist West. The politico-economic system, since August 1975, has helped develop a local capitalist class backed by its metropolitan centre in the West. The denationalisation policy and liberalized investment policies including investment of foreign private capital, etc., have opened the gates for international monopoly capital. Thus the aim and objects of the BAKSAL programme have been largely undermined.

However, the BAKSAL spirit seems to have survived many odds and has been institutionalised through the formation of a political party under the name of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League in October 1983. As the discussions in the next section of this chapter would indicate - this has come about as a cumulative effect of the role of the then Rakkhi Bahini, the BAKSAL leadership and the formation the militant Jatiya Mukti Bahini under the legendary freedom fighter 'Bangabir' Abdul Kadir Siddique.

At the time of Sheikh Mujib's assassination Nuruzzaman, Director of the Rakkhi Bahini was away in London. Some members of the Rakkhi Bahini wanted to confront the conspirators while another group hesitated because they lacked infrastructural support.



Moreover, Tofael Ahmed, the late President's Political Secretary and incharge of the Rakkhi Bahini could not take any decision regarding its strategy.<sup>40</sup>

The BAKSAL leadership, in general, also played a rather passive role. Some of them responded hesitantly to the counsels given by activists like Anwar Alam Shaheed, Golam Sarwar and Kadir Siddique,<sup>41</sup> and others joined Mushtaque's so-called Ministry.<sup>42</sup> Of course, within a short-time most leading figures were put behind bars.

However, Mansoor Ali, the Prime Minister and Secretary General of the BAKSAL at first tried to exercise his official capacity to confront the coup makers - and instructed the then Army Chief Maj. Gen.

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40. See A.L. Khatib, Who Killed Mujib? (New Delhi 1981), p. 8.
41. For example, Syed Nazrul Islam, the Vice-President pleaded helplessness to Kadir Siddique as gathered from an interview of Kadir Siddique by the present writer in December 1983.
42. The Mushtaque Ministry included: a ten member council of Ministers, 1. Abu Sayed Chowdhury, 2. Prof. Yusuf Ali, 3. Phani Majumdar, 4. Md. Shorab Hossain, 5. Manoranjan Dhar, 6. Abdul Momen, 7. Aguduzzaman Khan, 8. Dr. A.R. Mallik, 9. Dr. Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury, and 10. Abdul Mannan. The Ministers of State included: 1. Shaha Meazzam Hossain, 2. Prof. Nurul Islam Chowdhury, 3. Dewan Farid Ghazi, 4. Taheruddin Thakur, 5. K.M. Obaidur Rahman and 6. Nurul Islam Manzoor.

Safiullah and Air Chief A.K. Khondokar to arrest Mushtaque and capture or destroy the radio station. He further advised certain colleagues to leave government accommodations and meet at a secret place to chalk out further programme for retaliatory action. The army and air chiefs, however, expressed their allegiance to President Mushtaque.<sup>43</sup>

Reports indicated that spontaneous fighting was on between pro-Mujib militants and supporters of the new regime, and that a newly formed underground resistance movement led by the reorganised Mukti Bahini along with sections of Rakhi Bahini had pledged to avenge the killings.<sup>44</sup> These events indicated that pro-BAKSAL forces were at work. Further proof was seen through the widely circulated leaflet which said "Not all the sons of Sheikh Mujib were dead. One of

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43. See Mohammad Nasim, "Amar Pita O Neta M. Mansoor Ali" in Bairakantha (London) 6 November 1981. Also see weekly Khabor, 1 November 1981. In the early hours of 15 August after a assassination of Sheikh Mujib, Khadir Siddique also contacted Mansoor Ali via telephone and both of them agreed to resistance movement against Mushtaque government.
44. See Statesman and Hindustan Times (New Delhi) 18 August 1975, and Peter Hazelhurst in Times quoted in Sinha, n. 1, p. 17.

them is still alive. He is Kadir Siddiqui.<sup>45</sup>

According to Siddiqui's own account, between 15-20 August he and his close associates were able to publish the above mentioned leaflet and distribute it widely. They also got hold of a radio-transmitter which played till he left Dacca on the 20th August, his recorded speech with the text of the leaflet, his call for popular resistance against the illegitimate government, and Sheikh Mujib's historic 7 March 1971 address.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile he also took steps to form the underground Jatiya Mukti Bahini (JMB) with the ultimate objective of implementing the BAKSAL programme propounded by Sheikh Mujib for national unity and

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45. Hongkong Standard (Hong Kong), 12 November 1975. Abdul Kadir Siddiqui raised a disciplined and trained Army to fight hand in hand with the Mukti Bahini in the war of Liberation. He is dearly and valour against the Pak Army in 1971. He had declared himself as the living son of Bangobandhu. Subsequently he presented his arms to Bangobandhu at his call after independence on 24 January 1972.

46. Some of his associates were: Dr. Nunnabi, Resaul Karim Tarfder, Asraf Girani, Babul Huque, Abdul Mannan, Arif Ahmed Dulal, Yusuf Ali, Lutfur Rahman, Khalequzzaman Khasru, Anwer Alam Shahid, Khoka (Driver VZP). The above mentioned radio-transmitter was procured by one of Kadir Siddique's associate named Khoka from VZP a foreign construction company in Bangladesh; source: Kadir Siddique's interview by the present writer in December 1983.

peoples progress.<sup>47</sup> Although it was initially founded with only seven members, later it was joined by people from all walks of life who left their homes and joined JMB camps.<sup>48</sup>

The JMB sent its appeal for help and support to various governments, international organisations and voluntary associations. Kadir Siddiqui wrote to the UN Secretary General also to exercise his official influence to restore human rights in Bangladesh by helping to remove the murderous illegitimate and undemocratic regime in Bangladesh.<sup>49</sup>

Favourable response to appeals made by the JMB considerable. So was appreciation of the efforts made by Siddiqui. Begum Sheikh Hasina Wazed wrote,

Now we have none... you are the only person who has protested against such treachery, Khoda will bless you. We depend a lot on you. After the incident we thought of you immediately and we have got what we hoped for. We shall be by your side... punish the traitors adequately. What Kamal [and] Russel would have done if they were alive today, you are doing.<sup>50</sup>

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47. Ibid.

48. Bangladesh Jatiyo Biplobi Parisad Published a Bengali booklet, Bangladesher Mukti Juddher Dwetia Parjaya (Mymensingh, 1975).

49. Letter to the Secretary General of the UNO from Kadir Siddique on behalf of the JMB dt. 4-4-75.

50. Excerpt from Shekh Hasina's letter to Kadir Siddiqui dated 1 September 1976.

Sheikh Salim, younger brother of Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moni also wrote in the same vein.<sup>51</sup>

Among the political parties Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Chairman of NAP (B) sent an emissary to the JMB to convey his wishes for their success.<sup>52</sup> The Gen. Secretary of the CPB with the approval of the party sent a letter supporting the JMB. Nurul Islam, leader of the Juba Union and a CPB member himself visited the JMB headquarters to convey their allegiance.<sup>53</sup> Subsidiary bodies of the former BAKSAL like the Jatiyo Juba League and the Jatiyo Chhatra League with the consent of their respective Central Committees formally contacted the JMB and expressed the need for a coordinated programme to carry on with their respective efforts for the struggle.<sup>54</sup>

Besides, BAKSAL organisation in Germany, Sweden, London and Calcutta strongly expressed their support to

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51. Sheikh Selim's letter to Kadir Siddiqui, dated 14 October 1976 and 1st December 1976.
  52. Joy-Banqla, 4yh issue, 31 January 1976.
  53. Interview, n. 39.
  54. Letters to Kadir Siddiqui from Central Committee Jatiyo Juba League and Jatiyo Chhatra League dated, 7th June 1976.

JMB. Several booklets and News sheets were published by these BAKSAL Organisations, like the Banqlar Dak, Sunrise, Bairakantha and Sonar Bangla from London, Bajrakantha from Calcutta and Joy Bangla published by the publicity department of JMB. They contributed a lot in publicizing JMB's objectives and working.

At a personal level several noted personalities expressed their approval of and support to the JMB.<sup>55</sup> The JMB received support from various quarters in Bangladesh also.<sup>56</sup>

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55. Vide letters to Kadir Siddique from Abdur Razzak (ex-Ambassador, Chairman Sweden BAKSAL) dated 4 April 1977, Gaus Khan (Chairman London BAKSAL Sangram Committee) dated August 12, 1976. Abdul Gaffar Chodhury (reputed Journalist) dated 7 February 1976. Shawkat Osman (reputed intellectual) dated 12.1.77. Sheikh Hasina, Sheikh Rehana (daughter of Bangobandhu) dated 1st October 1976. Ranesh Das Gupta, F.A. Baglur Rashid (editor Bajrakantha, Calcutta) dated 25 Sarban, 1383 Bengali year. Dr. Majaharul Islam (ex-VC Rajshahi University), Anil Das Gupta (German BAKSAL Chief) dated, 24.4.78. Ruhul Quddus, Shamsuddin Mollaha (MP) dated 8.9.76, Eklashuddin Ahmed (MP), Anwer Chodhury (ex-Office Secretary Awami League) 19.1.77. Abu Sayeed (MP), Rowshan Ali (MP) 12.10.76, Abdul Latif Siddique (MP) 23.7.76, S.M. Yousef (Jubo League leader) 3.8.76, Mustofa Mohsin Nanto (Jubo league leader) 29.5.76, Moniem Sarker NAP(m) Leader, 12.8.76, Mohammad Nasim (BAKSAL Pabna Dist. Chief) 12.10.76, Luffur Rahman (MP) 12 August 1976.
56. Dr. Matin Chowdhury (VC Dhaka University), Abdur Razzak (BAKSAL Secretary), Begum Zohra Tajuddin (AL Leaders) Begum Sajeda Chowdhury

contd..../-

Besides, some Indian politicians, journalists and educationists made known their support to the JMB.<sup>57</sup>

However, a section of the BAKSAL leadership for personal and ideological reasons opposed the JMB and thus caused some harm to JMB activities. They were Chittaranjan Sutar, Hare Krishna Debnath group (staying in Calcutta), Abdul Mannan, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Shamsul Huq, Prof. Yusuf Ali, Majzuddin, Matiur Rahman, and others.<sup>58</sup>

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(BAKSAL Mahila Front Chief), Mohiuddin Ahmed (BAKSAL, EC Member), Shamsuzzoha (MP), Zillur Rahman (BAKSAL Secretary) Manoranjan Dhar (BAKSAL EC Member), Malek Ukil (BAKSAL EC member), Barhan Uddin Gagon (MP), Dr. Kamal Hossain (BAKSAL CC Member), Obidul Kader (Jatiya Chhatra League member), Mohiuddin Chowdhury (BAKSAL Chittagong Dist. Leader), Sultan Sharif (JL Member), Rashid Mosharaff (MP), Shahara Khatun (AL Leader), Dabir Hossain Bhiyan (Mymensingh AL Leaders), Fakir Abdur Razzak (JL Members), Dil Mahmud (Gramik League Leaders), Shreen Alam (Social workers) Source: Report of JMB member Giashuddin Ahmed Gaur Gopal Shaha, Sheikh Qaiyum and Baidyanath Kar and see Interview, n. 39.

57. Samar Guha, (MP), Priya Ranjan Das Munshi (MP), Journalist Paresh Saha, Prof. Santimoy Guha, vide Letters to Kadir Siddique dated 8.5.77, 3.12.76, 12.4.77 and 27.12.76 respectively.
58. Report of JMB member, Giashuddin Ahmed, Khaled Khuram, Gaur Gopal Shaha, Sheikh Qaiyam, Baidya Nath Kar, Golam Rabbani.

Ruhul Quddus ex-chief Secretary of Bangladesh Government wrote, "we have proof that our own friends have stabbed us from the back."<sup>59</sup>

Ideology, Objective and Aims of JMB :

The immediate object of the protest and resistance of the JMB was to overthrow the illegal and undemocratic regime through armed conflict, to avenge the assassinations of Sheikh Mujib and others and to prevent further killings of progressive workers and leaders. Its ultimate ideological commitment was to realise the objects of BAKSAL revolution and establish a socialistic order in Bangladesh.<sup>60</sup> It pledged to reconstruct the Bangladesh polity within the framework of the four basic principles of democracy, nationalism, socialism and secularism.<sup>61</sup> In Bangabir Kadir Siddiqui's own words:

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59. Vide letters to Mahfuzul Bari (an accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, 1967-69) from Ruhul Quddus, dated 6 January 1977.

60. See Joy Bangla Bengali booklet published by JMB 17 March, 1977, pp. 5-6.

61. Collection from JMB documents.



Our object is not to capture power for its own sake but to set up a truly patriotic representative government that would restore Bangladesh's independence and self-respect. We intend to cleanse the country of corrupt civil servants, racketeers, Razakars, Al-Badr's and oppressive big Business. The cosmetic changes in the country which have been reported on favourably by duped journalists of the Western media have only benefited certain urban vested interests. In the country-side extortion and exploitation continue untrammelled.<sup>62</sup>

Siddiqui also said that structurally the JMB did not comply with any conventional army, nor did its mode of operation resemble any army. It had both military and self-contained civil wings. The organisation had a definite political ideology, and efforts were being made to master the skill to run the state apparatus from village to the highest administrative level. The principal concerns of the JMB: politics, national reconstruction, avenging Bangabandhu's assassination and social change.<sup>63</sup>

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62. Banglar Dak (London), 21 November 1976; also see Sunil Kumar Guha (ed.), Joy Bangla, Bengali booklet, 29 February 1976 and Sengupta, n.l, p. 123.

63. Kadir Siddique's written interview by present writer on December 1983.

The JMB had several Divisions for coordinated and disciplined working and combatants were grouped into guerrilla squads and frontline fighters with camps near the border. There were to separate chain of commands for military action and non-military activities. Small units of the JMB worked clandestinely to create political awareness among the masses and propagate its politico-economic programmes in countryside of Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Sylhet, Dhaka, Tangail Rangpur Bogra, Pabna, Comilla and Chittagong districts.<sup>64</sup> The JMB had a political wing composed of efficient and politically mature persons, under the guidance of Kadir Siddique. The political wing was responsible for maintaining liason with the political forces in the country and also looked after national and international propaganda and publicity.

The JMB was able to liberate some areas in the border districts of Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Rangpur and Chittagong by fighting against the official Bangladesh Army - which was at times on clear defensive.<sup>65</sup>

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64. The present writer himself was associated with various divisions at different point of time also see Subrata Ball Upmahadesher Samaj O' Pradhan Dwandwa (Bengali) (Calcutta, 1979), p. 273.

65. Ibid.

The JMB - Government clashes which continued till May 1977 were known to the world, and JMB took special care to make them known. Kadir Siddique met Indian officials and was assured of political support.<sup>66</sup> According to one source the JMB sought unofficial support and funds to regroup themselves and the Indian Government acceded their demands.<sup>67</sup>

In 1977 however, the Zia government entered into a pact with the Morarji Desai government in India following which armed forces of both the countries surrounded the liberated areas near the borders with a pincer movement and the JMB camps were under seige for a month. During the seige JMB had skirmishes with both these forces. At this critical juncture the JMB commanders met at the Chandubhuia headquarters. After 78 hour long discussions, taking into consideration the overall situation, a new decision was taken. Following this on appointed dates the guerrilla fighters and some others clandestinely fanned out into pre-determined interiors of Bangladesh. Some JMB

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66. Talukder Maniruzzaman, Group Interests and Political Changes (New Delhi, 1982), p. 181, and also see n. 62.

67. Asoka Raina, Inside RAW: The Story of Indian Secret Service (New Delhi, 1981), p. 85.

members crossed over to India and about three thousand among them were handed over to the Bangladesh government by the Morarji government. Kadir Siddiqui and some others, however, were given political asylum in India.<sup>68</sup>

The JMB members who were returned to Bangladesh were categorized as "white", "grey" and "black". The "whites" were released after preliminary investigations, the "grey" were sent to concentration camps in Narundi in Jamalpur, Kolakopa in Dhaka and Model School in Mymensingh. The "blacks" were sent to Dhaka and Savar Defence Forces Intelligence (DFI) torture cells. Maulavi Syed Ahmed - a JMB commander and President of the Chittagong Awami Jubo League was killed in the Dhaka cantonment DFI torture cell on 12 August 1977.<sup>69</sup>

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68. The Hindustan Times, June 10, 1977.

In this critical situation two flag meetings were held between JMB and BDR in Bijoypur BDR camp and near Thalang river (Durgapur P.S.). In this flag meeting BDR side was led by Colonel Mahamudul Hasan (at Present Maj. Gen. and Commander in charge Bogra garison).

69. The present writer who was on the "black" list was in a cell near that of Maulavi Syed Ahmed. Others were Kabirul Islam Beg, Salauddin Haroon, Dipesh (engineer), Khorshed Alam (R.O.), Abdul Halim and Amanullah.

However, the JMB was not disbanded. In 1980 at a secret meeting in Dhaka an eleven member Biplobi Parishad (Revolutionary Council) was constituted with Bangabir Kadir Siddiqui in absentia as its supreme commander. The programme of armed conflicts was temporarily shelved but it was decided that the JMB would continue to assist in the movement for realisation of the BAKSAL programme in Bangladesh.<sup>70</sup> After this Kadir Siddique issued a signed leaflet which called upon the Bangalees to rise above all petty differences and fight unitedly against the anti-national conspiracies and warned that, "If we fail to put up effective resistance the Bangalee nation would never forgive us."<sup>71</sup>

Revival of the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik  
Awami League :

In Gen. Zia's regime a chain of coups and counter coups both successful and abortive, mutinies of army sepoy and non-commissioned officers against their senior officers, brutal assassination and

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70. The present writer interview by one Biplobi Parishad member neik name Ahmed on October 1983.

71. Bangalee Rukhe Darao, A Bengali leaflet signed by Kadir Siddique, dated 10 December, 1980.

execution of a large number of army men and political workers took place. Ziaur Rahman was installed in power by the reactionaries. Naturally he had to run his illegal government according to their dictates. The measures which he had taken during his rule are only to satisfy his Pakistani, American, Chinese and Saudi Arabian mentors. They were doling out liberal cash to keep alive the sagging morale of his illegal government to such an extent that Zia stated many times, "Money is <sup>no</sup> problem."

Ziaur Rahman's craving for power can be evident from the fact that he skilfully eliminated and liquidated his colleagues who supported him in seizing power. His volte face is now thoroughly exposed to the Bangladeshis. He severely cracked down on the JSD with whose support he seized power. He executed Col. Taher and jailed and killed many political leaders, workers and army personnel.<sup>72</sup>

Through an ordinance Gen Zia also amended the constitutional principles of state ideology. These amendments essentially aimed at picking up support from the rightists. The constitutional amendment

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72. See New Age, 30 November, 1975.

brought significant change in the four principles of state ideology. As a result, Bangladesh ceased to be secular, and the state's commitment to socialism was diluted. The amendment deleted, "secularism" as one of the principles of state ideology and in its place asserted "absolute trust and faith in Almighty Allah". Bangladesh did not become an 'Islamic Republic' but the amendment stressed that "the state shall endeavour to consolidate, preserve, and strengthen fraternal relations among muslim countries based on Islamic solidarity." Socialism was redefined to mean "economic and social justice". Article 42 of Bangladesh constitution provided for acquisition, nationalisation or requisition of property "with or without compensation" only, the amended form provided for with compensation. Additionally an emendment stipulated that a citizen of Bangladesh would be termed as 'Bangladeshi' and not as a "Bengalée" as provided for in the 1972 constitution.<sup>73</sup>

However, in order to legitimise and stabilise his position he went through the motions of "elections" and in the process political parties had been reconstituted in 1976 under the political parties Regulation

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73. See Jahan, n. 15, pp. 205-206.

(PPR) promulgated by the Martial Law Regime and it participated in the presidential election of June 1978 as a constituent of Ganotantric Oikyo Jot (GOJ). In August 1978 the anti-BAKSAL faction left the party and formed the Awami League (Mizan).

Following Zia's death, the vice President Abdus Sattar, took over as acting President. He was formally elected President on November 15, 1981 by General Election. But Sattar was soon toppled in a bloodless coup led by Army Chief Lt. Gen. H.M. Ershad on March 24, 1982. Ershad, as the Chief Martial Law Administrator assumed "all and full powers in view of the prevailing state of extreme frustration, despair and uncertainty."<sup>74</sup> As chief Martial Law Administrator Gen. Ershad functions as chief executive and head of government of the country. The constitution of the country has been suspended and the Jatiya Sangshad (Parliament) dissolved.<sup>75</sup> In 1984 Ershad declared himself as President of the country.

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74. The Bangladesh Observer, March 25 and March 27, 1982.

75. Under the Ershad regime initially political activities were banned. Then indoor politics was permitted. Later, open politics has been legalised although the Martial Law continuance.



In a few instances did the military regimes actually hand back power to the people. By "civilianizing" itself it only try to legitimise usurpation. The military regime of Gen. Ershad in Bangladesh also followed the same route of "Civilianzation" of its rule. The regime made repeated public pledges to "restore democracy" and revive political activities. Simultaneously Ershad was busy consolidating his power and perpetuating the rule of the regime by "restoration of democracy". Like Ziaur Rahman he also organised a political party Janodal. He followed Zia's route and model. Gen. Ershad obviously did not mean the return of government power to the political elite, rather he implied "civilianization" of the military regime. His machinations and the socio-economic conditions of the country have activised the political elements.

The first phase of the democratic struggle in Bangladesh against the military regime of Ershad for restoration of democratic rights and to thwart the design to sell the country's sovereignty to Ershad's foreign master has begun. At the initial stage of the anti-regime movement, with in the hard-core BAKSALites and others created a critical situation

and the hard-core left the Awami League and formed a new party under the name of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) with Mohiuddin Ahmed as its President and Abdur Razzak as its General Secretary in October 1983. The new BAKSAL while endorsing the 1975 BAKSAL objectives fully, - has for tactical reasons, - supported a multi party system. It can be surmised that the present BAKSAL is being supported and assisted by the JMB which also is made of hard core BAKSAL elements.

In Bangladesh the military rule of last three years having failed to minimise people's sufferings has lost its initial creditability. In this critical situation BAKSAL joined the main opposition alliance the "fifteen party alliance" against the military regime. BAKSAL General Secretary Abdur Razzak said, his party would work together with fifteen party alliance for the restoration of Parliamentary democracy. The ultimate objective of his party was the establishment of socialism through democracy. He differed with those who believed that the solution of the problems of the people could be made only through parliamentary democracy. He said that democracy was needed only to reach and organise the

the people as a means to achieve socialism. The rights of the people could not be realised without struggle and "we would realise the right of the people through a movement and not through compromise." 76

Bangladesh seems to be heading towards a critically conflictive situation, taking into account the wide area of disagreement between the effective political elements and ruling Junta. The hope for transition to democracy has once again eluded Bangladesh. The nation is back again on the path of uncertainty, with neither the military nor the politicians able to muffle the other, Bangladesh seems to be heading towards an endless and possibly bloody civil strife.

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76. For details see, Abdur Razzak, Sadaharn Sampadaker Report, Beshesh Council Adhibeshan, '83, Bengali booklet, (AL, Dhaka) 21st October 1983.

## Chapter - VI

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### CONCLUSION

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Bangladesh became a sovereign State on 16 December 1971 after a fullfledged liberation war against Pakistani army occupation. The war was the inevitable culmination of a protracted constitutional movement by the people of Bangladesh at the cost of tremendous sacrifice. In the entire period of these two stages the constitutional movement and the liberation war of the Bangladeshi nationalist movement the people were inspired by their will to end the politico-economic, regional and social exploitation of Bangladesh by the ruling coterie of Pakistan, and their aspirations to establish a democratic, exploitation-free society in Bangladesh. It was the East Pakistan Awami League which from its inception in 1949 galvanised for politico-economic self-determination. The Awami League was supported by great majority of the people belonging to different social strata and a considerable section of the students encompassing all strata of the student population.

During the struggle the political forces of Bangladesh grouped into roughly three distinct categories: (a) staunch autonomists, (b) moderates and (c) ultra-left socialist.

Right from 1947 to 1971 the student community of Bangladesh provided the most significant supporting structures to all the political movements. And because of students organisation's linkages with the principal political parties during this period, they played important role in the post-liberation politics of Bangladesh in terms of their parent parties.

The Purba Pakistan Chhatra League - the student wing of the Awami League was joined by a radical group claiming to be Trotskyites. This group exerted considerable pressure on Sheikh Mujib to declare Bangladesh's independence in March 1971, and its members were prepared to work for Bangladesh's transition to a socialistic society at any cost. Whatever their theoretical understanding of socialism might have been their speeches and statements reveal their limited knowledge regarding the application of their cherished ideal. And at times their limitation led to adventurist and ameturist politics being

initiated by them. It was a section of this radical group that being dissatisfied with the post-liberation programmes of the Awami League formed the Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) in 1973 and thus weakened the progressive faction of the Awami League which by being a movement party had a heterogeneous collection of social forces in it. At a very crucial juncture in the nations life this was a tactical mistake for any patriotic political group and this has caused the greater harm done to Bangladesh's national interest.

The division thus created within the socialist oriented political forces gave a new lease of life to the reactionary, anti-liberation forces in Bangladesh and emboldened them to design political conspiracies against the progressive forces.

JSD was also instrumental in involving the military with politics at a very inopportune moment. The Bangladesh armed forces constituted mainly with the active freedom fighters belonging to the ex-EPR, EBR and other para-military forces had neither the indoctrination of nor the inclination for the People's Army and therefore their politicisation instead of making them into a constructive, production-oriented group, turned them into another competitive group for mere political power and subsequently some of them turned anti-national conspirators. The AL government

like the JSD had realised the superfluousness of conventional armed forces for Bangladesh tried to convert it into a People's Army through the BAKSAL package.

The Awami League's objectives and programmes for Bangladesh's national reconstruction had a pre-determined course. Infact, the BAKSAL package was inherent in the 1970 (Pre-liberation) election manifesto of the Awami League. If at that stage the normal democratic process was allowed to take its due course in Pakistan, the Awami League being the majority party would have formed the national government, and the programmes would have been implemented on an all-Pakistan basis.

But the undeclared war by the Pakistani ruling clique against the people of Bangladesh created a situation where armed resistance became inevitable for their existence. Then later, when it took the dimension of an anti-Pakistan war of independence conducted by a duly formed provisional government of Bangladesh - the Indian government and people supported and assisted the people and the provisional government of Bangladesh. The Soviet Union, other socialist

countries of the world (except the People's Republic of China) and most of the democratic world supported the people of Bangladesh materially as well as morally towards the formal independence of Bangladesh. On the other hand, the United States of America and its newly acquired friend, the People's Republic of China for their own self-interest and tactical reasons supported the military junta of Pakistan. Their role during the liberation war influenced and guided both the pro-Chinese political parties and groups and those with their loyalty to neo-imperialistic metropolis of the world. A considerable section of the pro-Chinese groups disowned the liberation war on the basis of the Maoist interpretation of a People's war, and a section even assisted the Pakistan army in occupation of Bangladesh.

These apart, the staunchly religious parties also actively assisted the Pakistan army in their killing, looting, raping and other inhuman activities in Bangladesh.

During the liberation war a few high ranking personnel of the Provisional Government, were led by its foreign Minister Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed. Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed represented the conservative



elements in the Awami League, and had been a party official since its inception in 1949. As desired by the US he conspired to settle for a confederal arrangement with Pakistan instead of a sovereign and status. Although it did not fructify<sup>and</sup> the defeated allies of Pakistan and neo-imperialism lay low when the nation achieved freedom, they were far from being inactive. Very cunningly they carried out a whispering campaign against the nationalist political forces that had brought victory to the people. There was also lack of coordination between the student leaders and the Awami League leaders, between the freedom fighters and the leaders and bureaucrats in exile. Within the Mujib Bahini itself there was dissention regarding the protracted war and the post-war structural features of Bangladesh.

After liberation the political parties instead of creating a democratic atmosphere, created a chaotic condition which made the system ineffective and thus an alternative became necessary which could contain the meaning less fragmentation of political forces in the name of a multi-party parliamentary democracy. This chaos was heightened by the anti-social criminal activities of the fake freedom fighters. These fake freedom fighters had in glove with the neo-rich

opportunists successfully delinked the actual freedom fighters from the government and the people by design and this desolation created an atmosphere of despair in the politics of the country. Under these circumstances the Mujib government, in order to ensure Bangladesh's transition to socialist economy with very limited resources and a overwhelmingly large population, had to decide on an alternative system.

At independence the Awami League government had taken over the administration of a war ravaged country with shattered economy where there was lack of able administrators trained for running the central government of a sovereign state which lacked the administrative infrastructure. Moreover, it had to start democratic functioning with such law enforcing personnel and bureaucrats who had for long worked within the non-democratic all Pakistan structure and who operated as the representations of military power and communal forces and who had no appreciation for real effective democratic system. The new government of a newly independent physically devastated country, which had sacrificed 30 lakh of its people, had many other problems like the rehabilitation of one crore of refugees, three crore of homeless people, an empty

foreign exchange reserve, broken communication system, etc. In fact, it started with an absolutely empty hand, everything to be started from a scratch. The problems were aggravated by illegally kept large amount of arms and ammunitions, unlisted freedom fighters, political factionalism, political murder, subversive activities from underground by the pro-Pakistani Al-Badr and Razakars - all these factors combined to create an anarchical situation.

After overcoming the initial challenges the Awami League government in accordance with the promises made in the 1970 election manifesto and the Eleven points demands of the students action committee of 1969 established a multi-party parliamentary system for transition into a socialist economy in the hope that a healthy political atmosphere would ensure a better future for the people. Within a very short time it gave the country a constitution based on the earlier declared four basic principles of State policy, viz., democracy, nationalism, socialism and secularism. According to the promises made, it nationalised the basic industries, banks and insurance, started proceedings against the pro-Pakistani collaborators vide the collaborators Act. Further it all hitherto payable land-taxes and abolished land tax

upto 25 bighas of landholdings. It constituted the Planning Commission and launched the First Five Year Plan. In 1973 it held general elections in which it was returned to power with an overwhelming majority inspite of the fact that a very large number contested the elections.

But the anti-national, anti-liberation elements aided and abetted by external forces continued with anti-government conspiracies of various magnitudes. Unprecedented spate of floods followed by successive droughts created a famine situation in Bangladesh in 1974. US indifference, connivance and go slow tactics in the supply of urgently needed food supplies to Bangladesh led to large scale starvation deaths in the country. The national bourgeoisie and bureaucrats engaged themselves in subversive activities to stagnate the economy. The ultra-left and ultra-right attacked police and BDR posts, indulged in loot and arson and highjacking. A section of the ruling party itself started misusing political power for personal benefits and hastened polarisation within the party. On the other hand, the repatriated army personnel, steeped in the military ethos of their previous bosses in their endeavour to exact maximum benefit for themselves and re-establish

the Pakistani ethos, got involved in a conspiracy with the help of external assistance. The repatriated bureaucrats also tried to preserve the colonial administrative system introduced by the British for fulfilling its imperialist designs which was and later adopted and used by the Pakistani rulers for internal colonising.

All these created a crisis situation necessitating a revolutionary change in the politico-economic system. In his three and half years experience since attainment of independence in 1971, Sheikh Mujib realised that it would not be possible to achieve socio-economic emancipation of the masses through the existing capitalist-imperialist socio-economic structure. He also realised that a traditional, large and loosely-knit nationalist platform party like the Awami League alone could never be the instrument for establishing an exploitation-free society. Therefore, an alternative system was all the more required. With this in view the Awami League formed a three party alliance, the Gana Oikya Jote (GOJ), with the Communist Party of Bangladesh and the National Awami Party (pro-Moscow group). The GOJ was the first step toward the BAKSAL which took the formal shape in 1975 through the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution and

the following Presidential Orders. It meant abolition of the multi-party system and abolition of all other parties or their merger into a single national party - the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL). Later all the programmes envisaged was comprehensively called BAKSAL programmes and thus the abbreviation BAKSAL came to be known as somekind of a package which contained various programmes for comprehensive social transformation on the basis of the four basic principles through a transition to socialist economy.

The one party system thus introduced in Bangladesh was a mix of the established one party system in other countries and some innovations suited to the local conditions. On the whole BAKSAL provided for democratic centralism, effective collective leadership, utilisation of talent through national solidarity for developmental works, participation of the military, para-military and police personnel and social servants in open politics. It sought to strike a balance between political and administrative processes through a democratically achieved national consensus.

Although initially BAKSAL committee members at various levels were nominated mostly from Awami League, it was stated to be an interim arrangement understandably till the party became a cadre-based one through the rigid recruitment process and intensive training programmes prescribed in BAKSAL constitution.

As a starting point, agricultural output was to be shared through the cooperatives by the land owner, the government and tiller, industrial workers were to participate in the management and distribution, but inherent in the system was the ultimate social ownership of all the factors of production.

The new system envisaged smaller, manageable administrative units collectively run by party functionaries and administrative personnel including locally stationed military, para-military and police personnel and members of local judicial bodies. Thus it was a complete break from the colonial system. To transform the huge non-productive military into a "peoples army" they were to be involved in all developmental activities to be undertaken by such politico-economic-administrative units under the overall supervision of the district Governor of such units who were to be political appointees.

After the formation of the BAKSAL many political parties and groups barring the members ultra-right, ultra-left and a large chunk of the JSD applied for BAKSAL membership. They were mostly educated belonging to the middle classes. The initial BAKSAL leadership was also dominated by the middle classes - which was not an effective composition for initiating social changes for an exploitation-free society. However, Sheikh Mujib and a considerable section of the Awami League leadership was wedded to the idea of gradual transition to socialism through democratic functioning. The eight by-elections to the National Assembly under the short tenure of the BAKSAL system testifies its acceptance and applicability.

But the BAKSAL programme created a fear psychosis among the emergent capitalists, the merchant class, and blackmarketeers, the bureaucrats-turned capitalists, corrupt officials, etc. who saw their own demise at the advent of the "Second Revolution". The elements combined with the sub pro-imperialist elements in the BAKSAL and the anti-national section of the armed forces and killed the programme after they had assassinated the Bangobandhu, and his family members and other leaders. This was done when the



BAKSAL system was at its very formative stage and when the politically appointed District Governors were yet to take up their positions.

Subsequently, during the military and civil-military rule of Ziaur Rahman and H.M. Ershad <sup>through</sup> far reaching changes in the Constitution and other policy decisions, the secular and socialist approach of Bangladesh revolution has been eroded to a great extent. Over dependence on external assistance has taken the economy to a point of bankruptcy.

Against this onslaught on the basic ideology behind the creation of Bangladesh, a small but dedicated group of hard core and militant BAKSAL followers formed the Jatiya Mukti Bahini (JMB) under the overall command of "Bangabir" Abdul Kadir Siddique - a valiant freedom fighter and Governor elect of the Tangail district. From 1975 to 1977 the JMB fought pitched battle against the Bangladesh Armed forces in various border areas of Bangladesh. In 1977 the JMB adopted a different tactics and has spread out in the country for mobilising people in support of the BAKSAL system. That they have been successful to some extent atleast is indicated by the fact that the purely political elements of hard core BAKSAL followers who had

initially worked within the Bangladesh Awami League have formed their own party - The Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League in October 1983. The reconstituted BAKSAL while adhering the original BAKSAL objectives and programmes has, for the sake of expediency, accepted to agitate for a multiparty parliamentary system along with the Awami League as a constituent of the 15 Party alliance which is engaged in an oppositional movement against the military regime. The 15 party alliance which includes the CPB, the NAP (M) and some other progressive political parties which had supported the original BAKSAL programme. This alliance again, for the sake of political expediency, has agreed to coordinate the anti-regime movements with the Seven Party alliance on some agreed minimum demands like lifting of Martial Law, holding of elections under a caretaker government, etc. although the seven party alliance adhere to the politico-economic system operated by the civil-military regime of Ziaur Rahman. The ultra-right and ultra-left parties have their own groups.

So it appears that politics in independent Bangladesh, like that during the Pakistani days - is still in the grip of three mutually opposing sets

of interests viz., the nationalist-socialists, the communalist-centrists and the ultra-left adventurists. On the other hand the traditionally important politically powerful students, bureaucrats and the middle classes still play crucial role in the political dynamics of the country. The debate on the applicability of the BAKSAL system is still a matter of animated debate. External factors still influence in domestic politics of Bangladesh.

In the above context it is still difficult for Bangladesh to evolve a definite indigenous political economic ideal that would best serve the peoples interest. If an exploitation-free society is to be achieved in such a country, it is imperative that besides other nationalisation measures, the ownership of the largest source of production, that is, land, has to be brought under collective ownership and State control of distribution and marketing. The state should also be laid on labour intensive industrialisation with the help of intermediate technology.

With these in view it would appear that introduction of the BAKSAL system in 1975 was a step in the right direction.

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## APPENDIX - I

Fronts CommitteeJatiyo Krishak League

1. Phani Bhusan Majumdar (General Secretary)
2. Abdus Samad Azed
3. Abdur Rab Serniabat
4. Abdul Momin Talukdar
5. Abdur Rouf (MP)
6. Moni Singh
7. Haji Mohammad Danesh
8. Pir Habibur Rahman
9. Badal Rashid (MP)
10. M.A. Hanif (MP)
11. Delowar Hossain (MP)
12. Ali Ashraf (MP)
13. M. Anisuzzaman
14. Manzur Murshed
15. Rahmat Ali
16. Abdul Awal
17. Abdur Rouf Choudhury
18. Hedayetul Islam Khan
19. Dr. Mukhleour Rahman
20. Abdul Hakim
21. Sheikh Haronur Rashid
22. Habibullah Biswas

contd...../-

23. Abu Al Sayeed
24. Amjad Hossain
25. Nurur Rahman
26. Jiten Ghose
27. Bazlur Rahman
28. Abdul Karim
29. Nurul Islam

Jatiyo Sramik League

1. Professor Yusuf Ali (General Secretary)
2. Abdur Rahman (MP)
3. Kazi Muzammel Huq (MP)
4. Mahmudur Rahman Belayet (MP)
5. Abdul Alim (MP)
6. Chowdhury Harunur Rashid
7. Dinen Sen
8. Hasanuzzaman
9. Saifuddin Ahmed Manik
10. Susil Kumar Pal
11. Taheruddin Khan
12. Jamshed Ahmed Choudhury
13. A.B.M. Mohiuddin Ahmed Choudhury
14. Abdur Rouf
15. Mohammad Mohsin
16. Mohammed Emdad Hossain
17. Mahbulul Alam

contd...../-

18. S.M. Rumi
19. Delwar Hossain Khan Nayan
20. Mohammed Abdul Aziz
21. Abdur Rashid Labu
22. Manzural Ahsan Khan
23. Abdul Mannan
24. Habibur Rahman
25. Jahidur Rahman Zahid
26. Barrister Nurul Afsar
27. Hasanuddin Sarker
28. Jamaluddin
29. Mohammad Ahad
30. Abdus Salam Khan
31. Rahmatullah Choudhury
32. Habibur Rahman

Jatiyo Mohila League

1. Begum Sajeda Choudhury (General Secretary)
2. Dr. Nilima Ibrahim
3. Prof. Begum Maherunnessa Choudhury
4. Mrs. Syeda Razia Bano
5. Mrs. Montaz Begum (MP)
6. Mrs. Rafia Aktar Dolly (MP)
7. Prof. Azra Ali (MP)
8. Mrs. Kanika Biswas (MP)
9. Mrs. Sudipta Dewan (MP)
10. Begum Nazma Shamim Laizu

contd..../-

11. Begum Ivy Rahman
12. Miss Shahra Khatoon
13. Miss Mahmuda Choudhury
14. Mrs. Roushan Ara Mustafiz
15. Mrs. Nuzesh Muksud
16. Mrs. Maleka Begum
17. Mrs. Luffunnesa Bakul
18. Mrs. Feroza Begum
19. Mrs. Ayesha Khanam
20. Mrs. Nurjahan Begum
21. Farida Mohiuddin
22. Mrs. Ferdous Ara Dolly
23. Mrs. Mayis Jasmin

Jatiyo Jubo League

1. Tofael Ahmed (General Secretary)
2. Abdul Jalil (MP)
3. Sardar Amjad Hossain (MP)
4. Sultan Mahmud Sharif
5. Rajiuddin Ahmed
6. Amjad Hossain (MP)
7. Syed Rezaur Rahman
8. Mohammed Nasim
9. Nurul Islam
10. Muzaffar Hossain (MP)
11. S.M. Babar Ali (MP)

contd...../-

12. Nizamuddin Ahmed
13. Mohammed Ibrahim
14. S.M. Yusuf
15. Dr. Ali Haviz Selim
16. Fakir Abdur Razzaque
17. Shafiqul Aziz Mukul
18. Monirul Hug Choudhury
19. M.A. Rashid
20. Matiur Rahman
21. Abdul Monayem
22. Khairul Anam
23. Prof. Nim Chandra Bhowmik
24. Abdul Kadir Siddique
25. Mesbah Uddin Ahmed
26. Fakhruul Kamal
27. Abdur Razzaque

Jatiyo Chhatra League

1. Sheikh Shahidul Islam (General Secretary)
2. Mujaheedul Islam Selim
3. A.M. Ismat Quadir Gama
4. Rashedul Hasan Khan
5. Nurul Islam Milan
6. Nurul Alam Lenin
7. Sheikh Kamal
8. Mahbubzaman
9. Mustafa Jalal Mohiuddin
10. Chandan Choudhury



11. Khaled Khurram
  12. Obaidul Quader
  13. Momtaz Hossain
  14. Hare Krishna Debnath
  15. Ajoy Das Gupta
  16. Rabiul Alam Choudhury
  17. Fazlur Rahman Patal
  18. Syed Nurul Islam
  19. Lutfunnahar Hena
  20. Kazi Akram Hossain
  21. Shahadat Hossain
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## APPENDIX - II

Executive Committee

1. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Chairman)
  2. Sayed Nazrul Islam
  3. M. Mansoor Ali (Secretary General)
  4. Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed
  5. A.H.M. Kamaruzzaman
  6. Abdul Malek Ukil
  7. Professor Yusuf Ali
  8. Manoranjan Dhar
  9. Dr. Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury
  10. Mohiuddin Ahmed
  11. Gazi Golam Mostafa
  12. Zillur Rahman (Secretary)
  13. Sheikh Fazlul Huq (Secretary)
  14. Sheikh Abdul Aziz
  15. Abdur Razzak (Secretary)
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## APPENDIX - III

Central Committee

- |     |                              |                                      |
|-----|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Sheikh Mujibur Rahman        | (President)                          |
| 2.  | Syed Nazrul Islam            | (Vice-President)                     |
| 3.  | M. Mansoor Ali               | (Prime Minister)                     |
| 4.  | Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed    | (Minister)                           |
| 5.  | A.H.M. Kamaruzzaman          | (Minister)                           |
| 6.  | Abdul Malek Ukil             | (Speaker)                            |
| 7.  | Mohammadullah                | (Minister)                           |
| 8.  | Abdus Samad Azad             | (Minister)                           |
| 9.  | Professor Yusuf Ali          | (Minister)                           |
| 10. | Phani Bhusan Majumdar        | (Minister)                           |
| 11. | Dr. Kamal Hossain            | (Minister)                           |
| 12. | Sohrab Hossain               | (Minister)                           |
| 13. | Abdul Mannan                 | (Minister)                           |
| 14. | Abdur Rab Serneabat          | (Minister)                           |
| 15. | Manoranjan Dhar              | (Minister)                           |
| 16. | Abdul Momin                  | (Minister)                           |
| 17. | Asaduzzaman Khan             | (Minister)                           |
| 18. | M. Korban Ali                | (Minister)                           |
| 19. | Dr. A.R. Mallick             | (Minister)                           |
| 20. | Dr. Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury | (Minister)                           |
| 21. | Tofael Ahmed                 | (Special Assistant to the President) |
| 22. | Shah Moazzem Hossain         | (Chief Whip)                         |
| 23. | Abdul Momin Talukdar         | (State Minister)                     |

contd...../-

24. Dewan Farid Gazi (State Minister)
25. Professor Nurul Islam Chowdhury (State Minister)
26. Taheruddin Thakur (State Minister)
27. Muslemuddin Khan (State Minister)
28. Mohammed Nurul' Islam Manzoor (State Minister)
29. K.M. Obaidur Rahman (State Minister)
30. Dr. Khitish Chandra Mandal (State Minister)
31. Raizuddin Ahmed (State Minister)
32. M. Baitullah (Deputy Speaker)
33. Ruhul Quddus (Principal Secretary to the President)
34. Zillur Rahman (MP)
35. Mohiuddin Ahmed (MP)
36. Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni
37. Abdur Razzak (MP)
38. Sheikh Shahdul Islam
39. Anwar Chowdhury
40. Begum Taslima Abed (MP)
41. Begum Sajeda Chowdhury (MP)
42. Abdur Rahim
43. Abdul Awal (MP)
44. Iutfur Rahman (MP)
45. A.K. Mujibur Rahman (MP)
46. Dr. Mofiz Chowdhury (MP)
47. Dr. Alauddin (MP)

contd...../-

48. Dr. Ashabul Huq (MP)
49. Azizur Rahman Akkas (MP)
50. Roushan Ali (MP)
51. Sheikh Abdul Aziz (MP)
52. Salauddin Yusuf (MP)
53. Michael Sushil Adhikari
54. Kazi Abul Kasem (MP)
55. Mollah Jalauddin Ahmed (MP)
56. Shamsuddin Mollah (MP)
57. Gour Chandra Bala
58. Gazi Golam Mostafa (MP)
59. Shamsul Huq (MP)
60. Shamsuzzoha (MP)
61. Rafiquddin Dhuiyan (MP)
62. Syed Ahmed
63. Shamsur Rahman Khan (MP)
64. Nurul Huq (MP)
65. Kazi Zahurul Qayyum (MP)
66. Captain (Retd.) Sujat Ali (MP)
67. M.R. Siddqui (MP)
68. M.A. Wahab (MP)
69. Chittaranjan Sutar (MP)
70. Syeda Razia Banu (MP)
71. Ataur Rahman Khan (MP)
72. Khondoker Md. Elias
73. Mang Prue Syne (Chief of Maniksari, Chittagong Hill Tracts)
74. Professor Muzaffar Ahmed

contd...../-

75. Ataur Rahman
76. Syed Altaf Hossain
77. Pir Habibur Rahman
78. Mohammad Farhad
79. Begum Motia Chowdhury
80. Haji Md. Danesh
81. Toufiq Imam (Cabinet Secretary)
82. Nurul Islam (Secretary Foreign Trade)
83. Faizuddin Ahmed (Home Secretary)
84. Mahbubur Rahman (Establishment Secretary)
85. Abdul Khaleque (Secretary to the Vice-President)
86. Mujibur Huq (Defence Secretary)
87. Abdur Rahim (Secretary to the President)
88. Moinul Islam (Secretary Housing and Urban  
Development)
89. Syeduzzaman (Planning Secretary)
90. Anisuzzaman (Secretary Agriculture)
91. Dr. A. Sattar (Secretary to the President)
92. M.A. Samad (Communication Secretary)
93. Abu Taher (Secretary Land Administration  
and Land Reform)
94. Al Hossain (Secretary Power)
95. Dr. Tajul Hossain (Secretary Health)
96. Motiur Rahman (Chairman TCB)
97. Major General K.M. Shafiullah (Army Chief)
98. Air Vice Marshal A.K. Khondakar (Air Force  
Chief)

contd...../-

99. Commodore M.H.Khan (Naval Chief)
  100. Major General Khaliur Rahman (Drector  
General BDB)
  101. A.K.N. Ahmed (Governor Bangladesh Bank)
  102. Dr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury (Vice-Chancellor  
Dhaka University)
  103. Dr. M. Enamul Huq (Vice-Chancellor Jahangir  
Nagar University)
  104. A.T.M. Syed Hussain (Additional Secretary  
Establishment)
  105. Nurul Islam (Inspector General of Police)
  106. Dr. Nilima Ibrahim
  107. Obaidul Huq (Editor Bangladesh Observer)
  108. Dr. Nurul Islam (Director PG Hospital)
  109. Anwar Hossain Manju (Editor Ittefaq)
  110. Mizanur Rahman (former Chief Editor BPI)
  111. Monowarul Islam (Joint Secretary, President  
Secretariat)
  112. Brigadier A.N.M. Nurzzaman (Director JRB)
  113. Quamruzzaman (President Bangladesh Teacher  
Association)
  114. Dr. Mazhar Ali Quadri (President Bangladesh  
Physicians Association).
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## APPENDIX - IV

Full list of the BAKSAL District Committee

1. Cox's Bazaar : Afsar Kamal Chowdhury (General Secretary), A.S.M. Mozammel Huq, Mushtaq Ahmed Chowdhury MP, A.S.M. Rafiqullah, Nazrul Islam Choudhury, Golam Rabbani.
2. Chittagon (South): A.B.M. Siddique MP (General Secretary), Abu Saleh, Alaur Rahman Khan Kaiser, A.K.M. Abdul Mannan, Prof. Nazimuddin Ahmed Chowdhury.
3. Chittagong: Abdullah Al-Harun (General Secretary), M.A. Mannan MP., Moshraf Hossain MP, Kafiluddin MP, Ahmed Rahman Azmi Choudhury, A.G. Mahmud Kamal.
4. Feni: A.B.M. Taleb Ali MP (General Secretary), Ruhul Amin, Abdur Rahman, Aminul Karim Mazumdar, Syedul Huq, Jainal Hazari.
5. Laxmipur: Akhtaruzzaman (General Secretary), Shahjahan Kamal MP, Dr. Abdul Bashir, M. Alauddin, Fazlul Karim Chowdhury, Mozaffar Ahmed.
6. Noakhali: Shahiduddin Iskander (General Secretary), Naser Ahmed Chowdhury MP, Mohammad Hanif MP, Kamal Uddin, Azizul Huq, Nur Mohammad.

contd...../-



7. Comilla: Kazi Zahirul Qaiyum MP (General Secretary), Ahmed Ali, Abdul Aziz Khan, Prof. Abdur Rouf, Mainul Huda, Mohammad Faizullah.
8. Barhmanbaria: Lutful Hai Sachchu (General Secretary), Hamidur Rahman, Zahirul Huda, Mahbubul Huda Shah, Abdul Halim, Abdul Malek.
9. Chandpur: Abdur Rab (General Secretary), Abdul Karim Patwari MP, Sirajul Islam Patwari MP, Abu Jafar Maimuddin MP, Shefiullah, Abdul Momin Khan.
10. Sylhet: Habur Rahman MP (General Secretary), Dewan Nurul Hossain Chanchal, Shah Modabbir Ali, Lutfur Rahman, Abdul Momin, Gulzar Ahmed.
11. Sunamganj: Abdur Reis MP (General Secretary), Ali Younus, Asaddar Ali Chowdhury, Akmal Ali Mia, Barun Roy, Abdul Mannan Chowdhury.
12. Habiganj: Mostafa Shahid MP (General Secretary), D.A. Malek Chowdhury, Nimbar Ali Talukdar, Gopal Kishna Mohartna, Akaddas Ali, Afroz Bakht.
13. Satkhira: Syed Kamal Bakht MP (Gen. Sec.), Mamtaj Ahmed, A.F.M. Entaj Ali MP, Mansoor Ahmed, Amulya Sengupta, Prof. Abul Latif.

contd...../-

14. Jessore: Shah Hadiuzzaman MP (General Secretary), Tabibur Rahman Sarder MP, Almgir Siddique, Abdul Wahab Khan, Pranab Kumar Dhar, Tipu Sultan.
15. Narail: Shahid Ali Khan (General Secretary), Bazlur Rahman, B.M. Matiur Rahman, Shahiduzzaman, Fazlur Rahman Jinnah, Sarder Abdur Satter.
16. Jhenidah: A.B.M. Majid (General Secretary), Nurunnabi Siddique, Ziauddin Ahmed, Amir Hossain, Golam Rabbani, Matiur Rahman.
17. Magura: Abdur Rashid Biswas MP (General Secretary), Asaduzzaman, Mollah Nabuat Hossain, Khandker Abdul Majid, Ramendra Nath, Qari Abu Yusuf.
18. Maulvibazar: Md. Ilias (General Secretary), Giasuddin Chowdhury MP, Azizur Rahman, Mohammed Firoz, Prof. Faizur Rahman, Syed Abdul Matin.
19. Mymensingh: Anwarul Kader MP (General Secretary), Principal Matiur Rahman, Komoruddin, Shamsuddin Ahmed, Abul Mansur Ahmed, Jotish Bose.

contd...../-

20. Netrokona: Abdul Majid (Tara Mia) MP  
(General Secretary), Jamaluddin, Abdul  
Kuddus Azad, Abdul Kuddus, Shamsuzzoha, Gulzar.
21. Kishoregonj: Mostafizur Rahman Khan (General  
Secretary), Mohiuddin Ahmed, Syed Wahidul  
Islam, Abdul Hamid MP, Nurul Islam, Kazi  
Abdul Bari.
22. Jamalpur: Matiur Rahman Talukder (General  
Secretary), Syed Abdus Sobhan, Moenuddin  
Ahmed, Rezaul Karim Hira, Prof. Shahidullah,  
Md. Abdul Wadud.
23. Sherpur: Abdus Samad (General Secretary)  
Nizamuddin Ahmed, Abdul Hakim Sarker, Mohsin  
Ali, Babu Rabi Niyogi, Emdadul Haq Hira.
24. Barisal: Mohiuddin Ahmed MP (General Secretary),  
Deben Ghosh, Nurul Islam Munshi, Sgt. Fazlul  
Huq MP, Sobhan Masud, Abulhasnat Abdullah.
25. Pirozpur: Nurul Islam MP (General Secretary),  
Dr. Abdul Hai, Dhiren Datta, Abdur Rahman  
Sikder, Kazi Fazlul Huq, A.K.M. Awal.
26. Pstuakhali: Kazi Abul Kashem MP (General Sec-  
retary), Khondokar Abdul Aziz MP, Joinal Abedin,  
Habibur Rahman MP, Ahraf Ali Khan, Abdus Salam.

contd...../-

27. Jhalakathi: Syed Matiur Rahman (General Secretary), Mohammed Ali Khan, Jogendra Nath Biswas, Fazlul Huq, Mostafa Kamal Khan, Atharuddin Sikder.
28. Jaipurhat: Abdul Hasnat Chowdhury (General Secretary), Kafeluddin Ahmed, Sarder Belaluddin, Principal Sunil Chowdhury, Dedarul Huq, Mir Shahid Mandol.
29. Rangpur: Mohammad Abdul Awal MP (General Secretary), Azizul Huq, Siddique Hossain MP, Sufi Mahibul Hossain Hiru, Fulu Sarkar.
30. Galbandha: Nirmelendu Barman (General Secretary), Waliur Rahman MP, Shah Jahangir Kabir MP, Jamalur Rahman Prodhan, Ataur Rahman, Fazle Rabbi.
31. Nilphamari: Afsar Ali Ahmed MP, (General Secretary), Dabiruddin Ahmed, Abdur Rahman Chowdhury, Jonab Ali MP, Abdul Gaffar, Nur Kutubul Alam Chowdhury.
32. Kurigram: Ahmed Hossain Sarker (General Secretary), Amanullah Ahmed, Abul Hossain MP, Nurul Islam Papu, Syed Mansur Ali Tunker, Moinruddin.

contd...../-

33. Kushtia: Azizur Rahman Akkas MP (General Secretary), Shamsul Alam Dudu, Nazrul Islam, Rowshan Ali, Akkas Ali Manju, Rashiduzzaman Dudu.
34. Chuadanga: Mohammed Yunus Ali (General Secretary), Dr. Nazir Ahmed, Mafizur Rahman, Mir Anwer Ali, Kazi Kamal, Joarder Solaiman Huq Saloon.
35. Meherpur: Nurul Huq (General Secretary), Jalaluddin, Ataul Huq, Ismail Hossain, Abdul Mannan, Mozammel Huq.
36. Serajganj : Dabiruddin Ahmed MP (General Secretary), Anwer Hossain Ratu, Amullaya Lahiri, Shahidul Islam Talukder, Amir Hossain Bhulu, Rafiqul Alam Khan.
37. Pabna: Mohammed Nasim (General Secretary), Mohiuddin Ahmed MP, M.A.Ghani, Rezaul Karim, Shahbuddin, Aminul Islam Badsha.
38. Tangail: Hatem Ali Talukder MP (General Secretary) Mirza Tofazzal Hossain Mukul MP, Principal Humayun Khaled MP, Fazlur Rehman Faruque MP, Showkat Talukder, Abdur Rahman.

contd...../-

39. Bikrampur: Abdul Karim Bepari MP (General Secretary), Haroom-ur-Rashid, Shamsul Huda MP, Abdul Hamid Fakir, Dr. Amir Hossain, Mohammed Hossain Babul.
40. Manikganj: Mafizul Islam Kamal MP (General Secretary), Dr. Abdul Khair MP, Giriza Mohan Shaha Jantu, Khandakar Faruque Hossain, Aftabuddin, Siddique Rouf Khan.
41. Dhaka Metropolitan: Gazi Golam Mustafa MP (General Secretary), Afsal Hossain MP, Serajul Islam, Mohammed Sultan, Mozaffar Hossain, Mustafa Mohsin.
42. Dhaka: Mohammad Moizuddin MP (General Secretary), Mohammad Habibullah, Borhanuddin Ahmed MP, Abdus Sabur Ashrafi, Khandker Haroon-ur-Rashid MP, Yahya Chowdhury Pintu.
43. Narsingdi: M.R. Moslehuddin Bhuiya MP (General Secretary), Rabiul Awal Kiran MP, Ali Akber, Abdul Monaem, Swapan Kumar Shaha, Mohammad Taleb Ali.
44. Barguna: Abdul Latif Mia (General Secretary), Nurul Islam Sikder, Principal Shamsul Alam, Nizamuddin Ahmed MP, Nasir Talukder, Mohammad Yunus Sharif.

.contd...../-

45. Bholā: Shamsuddin Ahmed Mia (General Secretary),  
Riazuddin Ahmed, Rezaul Karim Chunnu Mia,  
Nazrul Islam MP, Maksudur Rahman, Golam  
Mostafa.
46. Faridpur: S.M. Nurunnabi (General Secretary),  
Mosharraf Hossain, Salam Mia MP, Bibhoti  
Bhushan Ghosh, Monoranjan Sha, Mohammad Jafar.
47. Rajbari: Dr. Mohammad Yahya (General Secretary),  
Kazi Hedayet Hossain, Dr. Abdul Malek MP,  
Dr. Jalillur Rahman, Magrur Ahmed, Amjad  
Hossain.
48. Madaripur: Alhaj Aminul Islam MP (General  
Secretary), Amir Hossain, Dr. Rakibuddin, Ali  
Ahmed, Amjad Hossain, Abdur Rab Munshi.
49. Gopalganj: Nazir Ahmed Talukder MP (General  
Secretary), Kazi Abdur Rashid, Biran Biswas,  
Nausheruzzaman, Qamrul Islam Rois, Sheikh  
Mohammad Abdullah.
50. Khulna: Salahuddin Yusuf MP (General Secretary),  
Abdul Bari MP, S.M. Babar Ali, Shamsur Rahman  
Moni, Abdus Salam, Khaibar Hossain.
51. Bagerhat: Sheikh Ali Ahmed (General Secretary),  
Ganesh Chandra Das, Gazi Abdul Jail, Abdus  
Sattar Khan, Prof. Syed Shamsul Huq, Abdus Sabur.

52. Rajshahi: Dr. Alauddin MP (General Secretary), Md. Mohsin MP, Abdul Hadi, Shah Md. Jafarullah MP, Nurul Islam Thandu, Mahbubizamman Bhulu.
53. Chapai Nawabganj: Dr. Bashirul Huq Chowdhury (General Secretary), Hafizul Rahman Hasnu, Dr. Moinuddin Ahmed MP, Aminul Ahmed, Prof. Shamsul Huda, Golam Arif Tipu.
54. Naowaron: Atowar Rahman Talukder MP (General Secretary), Yasin Ali, Shamsul Huq Siddique, M.A. Rakib, Dr. A.M. Afzal Hossain, Kazi Rezaul Islam.
55. Natore: Ashraful Islam MP (General Secretary), Rafiquddin Sarker MP, Saiful Islam MP, Md. Mohsinul Huq, Anisul Islam, Majedur Rahman Chand.
56. Bogra: Muhammadul Hasan Khan (General Secretary), Mollah Mujibur Rahman, Amanullah Khan MP, Muzaffar Hossain MP, Dr. Jahidur Rahman, Musharraf Mondol.
57. Dinajpur: Azizul Islam Zaglu (General Secretary), Mahtab-uddin MP, Ukiluddin Mondol, Abu Toab Sardar, Mosharraf Hussain MP, Mahatabuddin Sarker.

contd...../-



58. Tekurgaon: Sirajul Islam MP (General Secretary),  
Khedemul Islam, Mirza Rafiqul Islam, Ali  
Akber MP, Azizul Huq, Nurul Huq.
59. Rangamati: Charubikash Chakma, Saidur Rahman,  
Dr. A.K. Dewan, Subimal Dewan, Gananendra  
Bikash Chakama, Kumar Sumit Roy.
60. Bandarban: Kiao Sun Pro (General Secretary).
61. Khagrachari: Ananta Bihari Thiga (General  
Secretary).
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## APPENDIX - V

Governor Designate

Name of District	Name of Governors
1. Cox's Bazar	Zahirul Islam, ex-MCA
2. Chittagong	Mohammed Khaled, MP
3. South Chittagong (Patia)	Zakerul Huq Chowdhury
4. Bandarban	Sri Mang Sh. Pru Chowdhury (B. Tribe Chief).
5. Khagrachari (Ramgarh)	Mang Pru Sine (Manikchari-Khagrachari Tribe Chief)
6. Rangamati	A. Kader, DC
7. Feni	Khaja Ahmed, MP.
8. Laxmipur	Abdur Rashid, MP.
9. Noakhali	Nurul Huq, MP.
10. Comilla	Prof. Khorshed Alam MP.
11. Brahmanbaria	Ali Azam, MP.
12. Chandpur	Abdul Awal, MP.
13. Habiganj*	Mostafa Ali, MP/ Manik Chowdhury
14. Maulavibazzar	Nurul Ahad, DC.
15. Sylhet	Md. Ershadul Huq, DC.
16. Sunamganj	Abdul Hakim Chowdhury, MP.
17. Kishoreganj	Abdus Satter, DC.

\*Mostafa Ali suddenly died than Government appointment Manik Chowdhury as Governor of Habiganj.

contd..../-

18. Netrokona	Zubed Ali, MP.
19. Mymensingh	Rafiquddin Bhuyan MP.
20. Sherpur	Md. Anisur Rahman, MP.
21. Tangail	(Tiger) Abdul Kader Siddique
22. Dhaka Metropolitan	M.A. Taher, (Sec. Ministry of Land Reforms).
23. Dhaka	Ashraf Ali Chowdhury ex-MCA
24. Jamalpur	Abdul Hakim MP.
25. Bikrampur	Shamsul Huq, Ex-MCA
26. Narsingdi	Aftabuddin Bhuyan, MP.
27. Manikganj	M. Nuruzzaman (Transport Commissioner)
28. Faridpur	M. Shamsuddin Mollah, MP.
29. Rajbari	Abdul Wajed Chowdhury
30. Madaripur	Abedur Reza Khan, MP.
31. Gopalganj	A.H.M. Mofazzel Karim DC.
32. Bhola	S.R. Khan (East. Divn).
33. Jhalakati	Amir Hussain, MP.
34. Barisal	Aminul Huq Chowdhury
35. Pirojpur	Enayet Hussain Khan, MP.
36. Patukhali	Shahzada Abdul Malik Khan, MP.
37. Barguna	Shafiur Rahman, DC.
38. Bagerhat	Abdul Latif Khan, ex-MCA

contd..../-

39. Khulna	Col. Muhammed Anwarullah
40. Satkhira	Kazi Manzur-e-Maula, DC.
41. Jessor	Raushan Ali, MP.
42. Narail	Khondoker Abdul Hafiz, MP.
43. Jhenidsh	J.K.M. Aziz, MP.
44. Magura	Lutfullahet Majid, DC.
45. Kushtia	Abdur Rauf Chowdhury, MP.
46. Chuadanga	M. Fayerur Razzak DC.
47. Meherpur	Shahiuddin Ahmed, MP.
48. Pabna	Prof. Abu Sayeed, MP.
49. Serajgang	Notahar Hossain Talukdar.
50. Bogra	A.K. Mujibur Rahman, MP
51. Jaipurhat	Kasimuddin Ahmed, MP.
52. Dinajpur	Nazibur Rahman
53. Thankurgaon	M. Fazlul Karim MP.
54. Nilphamari	M. Abdur Raud, MP(whip).
55. Rangpur	A.K.M. Jalaluddin, DC
56. Gaibandha	Lutfur Rahman, MP.
57. Kurigram	Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, MP.
58. Natore	Shanker Govinda Chowdhury ex-MCA.
59. Rajshahi	Ataur Rahman
60. Naogaon	Muhammed Abdul Jaili, MP.
61. Nawabganj	Dr. A.A.M. Mesbahul Huq MP.

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