



**HYBRID**  
**Seminar on**  
**Bangabandhu's Vision: Relevance**  
**in the Context of 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Sunday, 28 August 2022**



**Organised by**  
**Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS)**



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# SEMINAR

## on

# Bangabandhu's Vision: Relevance in the Context of 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) organised a hybrid seminar titled “**Bangabandhu's Vision: Relevance in the Context of 21st Century**” on 28 August 2022 at the BIISS auditorium. The seminar was divided into two sessions: inaugural session and a working session. **H E Mr Anisul Huq, MP**, honourable Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, graced the seminar as the Chief Guest of the inaugural session. **Major General Mohammad Maksudur Rahman, OSP, BSP, psc**, Director General, BIISS delivered the welcome address.

**Professor Dr Delwar Hossain**, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka, and Member, Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC), chaired the inaugural session. **Professor Dr Imtiaz Ahmed**, Department of International Relations, and Director, Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka chaired the working session.





During the working session, four presentations were made. **Lt Col (retd) Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir, Bir Protik** made a presentation on “Bangabandhu’s Vision on Peace, Security and Prosperity: Relevance in the Context of 21<sup>st</sup> Century”; **Professor Dr Syed Anwar Husain**, Bangabandhu Chair Professor, Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) presented on “International System and Just World: The Ideas of Bangabandhu”; **Ambassador Muhammad Zamir**, former Chief Information Commissioner of Bangladesh deliberated on “Foreign Policy and Diplomacy: The Principles of Bangabandhu”; and Dr Atiur Rahman, Bangabandhu Chair Professor, University of Dhaka put forward his thoughts on “Global Economic Order: The Philosophies of Bangabandhu”. These presentations were followed by an interactive open discussion session.

Senior officials from different ministries, ambassadors, high commissioners, former diplomats, senior military officials, media, academia, researchers, teachers and students from different universities, and representatives from different international organisations participated in the seminar and enriched it by presenting their valuable opinions, comments, suggestions and observations during the open discussion session.



# INAUGURAL SESSION

## WELCOME ADDRESS



**Major General Mohammad Maksudur Rahman, OSP, BSP, psc**  
Director General, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS)

On behalf of Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), **Major General Mohammad Maksudur Rahman, OSP, BSP, psc**, Director General, BISS welcomed everyone to the webinar. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs for gracing the occasion.

At the outset, in remembrance of the month of August, the darkest month of Bangladesh's history, he paid homage to the memory of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members who were martyred in the gruesome night of the 15th August. He also expressed his deepest respect for the millions who sacrificed their lives and limbs for liberation of Bangladesh.



He expressed that Bangabandhu and Bangladesh are inseparable. The long history of the emancipation of Bangladesh is deeply rooted in the politics and policies of the periods preceding the liberation movement. The transformation of Sheikh Mujib to Bangabandhu and the priming of an oppressed nation toward emancipation are congruously the same story. As an iconic leader of Bangladesh's national struggle for liberation, General Rahman argued that Bangabandhu's worldview as well as philosophical understanding were based upon his experience from the brutal, oppressive, and discriminatory colonial rule of the British Empire and later, Pakistan.

He further mentioned that Bangabandhu's struggle to establish democracy, and ensuring economic and political rights of the oppressed people was highly reflected in his philosophical base. In this regard, the Director General quoted Bangabandhu's famous assertion, "The world is now divided into two — the oppressors and the oppressed — and I am with the oppressed." In a world that was polarised by the Cold War, Bangabandhu wanted to maintain neutrality, equidistance, and peaceful coexistence. He also said that Bangabandhu's ideological orientation and indomitable commitment to world peace made him part of the core leadership within the NAM movement. He mentioned that to achieve peace for Bangladesh and the whole of humanity, Bangabandhu believed in multilateralism, rule of law, and international cooperation. Hence, the guiding principles of Bangladesh's foreign policy testify how they have their roots entrenched in Bangabandhu's philosophical vision.

General Rahman also argued that the foreign policy priorities, choices, and decisions made by Bangabandhu, and the way he projected Bangladesh's national interest in the international forums, clearly demonstrate a transformational leadership. Bangabandhu was keen to address the long-term challenges by identifying the national priorities and also making long-term and high-impact foreign policy legacies. The first and foremost measure Bangabandhu adopted was to bring back the millions of refugees and resettle them in independent Bangladesh. Then he ensured internal and external security through the withdrawal of troops from Bangladesh within a very short period, and professionalising Bangladesh's own law and order forces. On the macro-economic front, Bangabandhu prioritised construction and rehabilitation with a special focus on making basic amenities available for the people in need. Urgent initiatives were undertaken for the infrastructural rebuilding of the key sectors like transport, power, and agriculture which incurred severe loss and damage during the war. Bangabandhu also took special initiative to launch Bangladesh's first Five-year Plan. He added that the people of Bangladesh still boast of

having been able to adopt a full-fledged Constitution embedded with basic principles of state policy just in *Three hundred twenty-five* days of the country's liberation.

At the end of his address, General Rahman opined that the people of Bangladesh are fortunate to have had a leader like Bangabandhu with timeless leadership qualities that are equally relevant today. It was a great misfortune to have lost him untimely. Once again, he welcomed all the participants to that auspicious occasion and expressed his hearty gratitude to our honourable Chief Guest for gracing it with his kind presence.





## SPEECH BY THE CHIEF GUEST



### **Mr Anisul Huq, MP**

Honourable Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

At the outset, **Mr Anisul Huq, MP**, Honourable Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh expressed his profound thanks to the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) for inviting him to the seminar. He also paid deep respect to the father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who's charismatic leadership and long struggle helped the country in achieving our long-cherished independence. In August, the month of mourning, he also recalled with a heavy heart, the tragic event of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1975 and paid his deepest homage to the memory of those who were brutally killed along with the Father of the Nation on that fateful night. He believed that the seminar would shed light on the vision of Bangabandhu and his inspiring leadership qualities.

He noted, Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was not only a great political leader, but also a political philosopher, an organiser of hundreds of

protest movements against social and political injustice, and a fighter for the liberation of oppressed people. His charismatic leadership paved the way for Bangladesh to become independent. Many of the world's greatest thinkers and leaders' work and philosophy had a direct influence on Bangabandhu's work, philosophy, and political belief. And he successfully inculcated the teachings and philosophies of the great leaders and applied them to liberating the Bengalis. Furthermore, Bangabandhu's fight for freedom and equality did not stop at the borders of Bangladesh; rather, he was a strong voice for the world's underprivileged. Therefore, his vision for a peaceful and just society is still pertinent to dealing with the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It was Bangabandhu's vision of freedom to build an independent state. For that to happen, he called for the most comprehensive and wide-ranging pleas for freedom ever. Independence from Pakistan was a prelude to revolutionary emancipation from not only Pakistani domination but also from decades of injustices imposed on ordinary Bangladeshis. When Bangabandhu's dream of building the Bengali nation was accomplished, he turned his attention to the development of the country. His vision for Bangladesh's development was to create a just and equitable society based on respect for individual rights and a commitment to eliminating poverty, hunger, corruption, and exploitation. Through the four core pillars of Bangladesh's Constitution, Bangabandhu was able to portray his vision for a developed Bangladesh. Those pillars were namely democracy, nationalism, secularism, and socialism. He highlighted those pillars in which Bangabandhu's vision remains impressively relevant to the contemporary world.

He opined that from the outset of his political career, Bangabandhu had a strong belief in parliamentary democracy as the best form of government. Additionally, in the Unfinished Memoirs, Bangabandhu's thoughts on the perfect functioning of democracy could be found. When Bangabandhu was imprisoned repeatedly, his prison diaries served as a record of his opinions on democracy's principles and workings. It is worth noting that Bangabandhu was elected as General Secretary of his party by direct votes every time from 1953 to 1966. Afterwards, he was elected as the President of his party from 1966 to 1974 by direct votes. Even after becoming the country's supreme leader, he steadfastly adhered to democratic principles. Following independence, he introduced the constitution and scheduled national elections in 1973. Having the belief that people are the ultimate source of authority, he also included democratic norms in his proposals for administrative and social reform. Hence, his values of democracy, equality, and justice are as applicable today as when he was alive.



To uphold another core pillar of his vision – nationalism, it was he, who successfully countered Pakistani nationalism by magnificently promoting the cause of Bengali nationalism. He was the pinnacle of Bengali nationalism. Although the journey of Bengali nationalism began as a linguistic nationalism, it has since evolved to include elements of ethnography and geography as well. Bangabandhu was the perfect embodiment of Bangladeshi nationalism, which was a three-dimensional construct and concentration. Having brought Bengali nationalism to a successful conclusion, it gave an ultimate triumph to the man, our father of the nation, who had steered the movement towards achieving that glorious end. As a perfect illustration of Bengali nationalism, we saw that the Rabindra sangeet, “Amar Sonar Bangla, Ami Tomay Bhalobashi” – a melodious song that best expresses our love for our country in glowing terms, was chosen by Bangabandhu as our national anthem.

He added that being pragmatic in nature, Bangabandhu had an incredible ability to adapt and thrive in a changing world. Although he was a believer in socialism and not in capitalism, for him, the choice was between neoliberalism and authoritarian socialism. As for both, he was well aware of the threats posed by imperialism in some parts of the world. While he strongly supported equity, he also believed in the need for individual liberty. Hence, we saw that he outlined a new paradigm for the socialistic transformation of society and economics by combining socialism and democracy. Given the consequences of both systems, it can be argued that Bangabandhu was well ahead of many countries in pursuing a balanced form of social democracy. In this regard, he opposed a mixed economy and advocated for an indigenous socialist system that was rooted in Bengali culture and tradition.

He noted that in his commitment to secularism, Bangabandhu's political philosophy encompassed a rejection of efforts to sow division and animosity among various ethnic and religious groups. Throughout his life, he was a staunch opponent of societal violence. He always advocated for the coexistence and mutual tolerance of all ethnic and racial identities, and he spoke out in favour of the equal treatment of all people. He was opposed to any kind of sectarian riots. If we see the Unfinished Memoirs, we will find lots of prime examples of his strong support of secularism. When Hindu-Muslim riots erupted across India in 1964, he launched a civic movement to keep East Bengal free of such violence. Even in his speech on March 7, 1971, he urged people to be on guard against the possibility of intergroup conflict.



Although Bangabandhu adhered to the preaching of Islam, he was a staunch opponent of the political exploitation of religious campaigning. Hence, he criticised the Muslim League for focusing solely on promoting Islam as a political ideology while ignoring the socioeconomic conditions of the local population. The prime example of using religious preaching as a political slogan was to order the Bengalis to give up their demand of speaking Bengali. With that incident, Bangabandhu realised that the use of religion was used as an instrument of oppression by the Pakistani politicians to deny recognition of the Bengali language. And then, we saw how relentlessly Bangabandhu fought for the cause of the Bengali language. By acknowledging Bangabandhu's vision of secularism, personalities like Nobel Laureate Professor Amartya Sen also admitted that Bangabandhu's secularist values are still applicable to the contemporary world and most nations should adhere to his values in order to create an egalitarian society.

He further added that aside from the four pillars of Bangladesh's constitution that best define Bangabandhu's vision very effectively, his revelation for foreign policy still reverberates with the collective aspirations to build a better world today through seeking



peace, justice, development, and cooperation. Bangabandhu's intriguing role in shaping Bangladesh's foreign policy as a fledgling nation is well documented. Bangladesh's foreign policy dictum is based on his principle of "friendship to all and malice towards none," which the country is still following religiously. And this dictum proved itself very much relevant in today's changing world order under a "neo-cold war paradigm". In light of the changing situation, the fundamental idea of "friendship to everyone, malice to none" must serve as our compass. There should be no one in particular that we take a stand for or against. In this regard, Bangabandhu's foreign policy guiding principles that saved the nation from the cold war period doldrums can be the ultimate salvation for the nation to navigate today's geopolitical uncertainties.

Honourable Chief Guest concluded his speech by mentioning Bangabandhu's commitment to defending the rights of the underprivileged extended well beyond the border of Bangladesh. And his visions can be inspirational for oppressed people around the world even in the 21st century. Bangabandhu is a kind of leader who changed the course of history, founded an independent state, shaped and framed the foreign policy of a budding state. It was his political vision that had an impact largely in making history for a nation. Having said these words, He wished all successful deliberations and discussions in the sessions.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS BY THE SESSION CHAIR



### **Professor Dr Delwar Hossain**

Professor of International Relations, University of Dhaka  
and Member, Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC)

**Dr Delwar Hossain**, Professor of International Relations, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and Member, Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) started his speech by agreeing with the Chief Guest. He noted that the minister's speech has very rightly highlighted the political thoughts and philosophy of Banganahdhu that has guided Bangladesh's vision and achievements since 1948 and one after another, finally the actual implementation of the dream of Sonar Bangla. He said that the topic of the seminar is very relevant, and the honourable chief guest also emphasised the relevance of vision, which can be understood through his contribution to different movements and his thoughts and how he felt about society. And Bangabandhu was particularly focused on pursuing peace not only at the global level but also at the societal level. Dr Hossain highlighted Bangabandhu's role in launching a non-violent movement against the Pakistani rulers. He tried to further elaborate on the topic of Bangbandhu's vision. He said that there are several factors, and in his opinion, the vision was based on emancipation and hope. So,



Bangabandhu was looking for emancipation, but at the same time, he was very hopeful. He was a very optimistic person. And that is reflected in his philosophy and in his works. And the second thing about the vision is that vision without courage does not help. Bangabandhu had both. Bangabandhu had a vision, he had the courage and also resilience. That actually made the mix of his thoughts which is a combination of indigenous understanding of society and at the same time world views that we know existed during that time in the 1970s.

Professore Delwar then shared one policy dictum that Bangladesh follows which is actually part of Bangabandhu's vision- "the friendship to all and malice towards none". This very idea is often thought to have come after Bangabandhu's coming to Bangladesh on 10th January 1972. But if one sees the history and reads the secret documents of the Pakistan intelligence branch, Volume 10, page 35, one will find that when Bangabandhu was visiting Khulna to attend a sort of reunion, he mentioned that Awami League supported the Tashkent agreement and he was saying that in the working committee of Awami League that they would pass a resolution focusing on "friendship to all malice towards none" and it was in 1966. So, that dictum was spelt out by Bangabandhu on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1966. So, the vision of Bangabandhu about the future of Bangladesh in terms of its global role and also in terms of how Bangladesh could be run was in his mind long before. Dr Hossain also highlighted that the honourable chief guest had also mentioned the four principles of our 1972 constitution.

He said that the world started a new millennium in 2000 with promise and hope but eventually with the 9/11 attacks and currently with Ukraine and Taiwan crisis and the global powers is going through rivalry and also the cold war situation. So Bangabandhu's ideas which are seen in a 1974's UN speech focusing on the redistribution of resources in the world, and on the new international economic order and establishment of humanity are really contemporary and will continue to inspire the world for thousands of years. And when people talk about vision 2041 (which the honourable Prime Minister is focusing on) that is also based on the vision of Bangabandhu's vision of sonar bangla. Finally, He emphasised that the honourable Prime Minister is the daughter of Bangabandhu and she is the torch bearer of his vision. And people can now see the overwhelming success of Bangladesh; in the development arena, in prosperity and also in the foreign policy arena. How Bangladesh is balancing great powers, and how it is achieving success one after another, is praised by many countries. They are sometimes puzzled that how Bangladesh is maintaining China, and India together and the Prime Minister said the same thing in different capitals that Bangladesh can overcome geopolitical realities through cooperation. And these are the essence of Bangabandhu's global vision that is there to guide us.

# WORKING SESSION

## PRESENTATION ONE

### *Bangabandhu's Vision on Peace, Security and Prosperity: Relevance in the Context of 21 Century*



**Lt Col (Retd) Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir, Bir Protik (RM)**

Recipient of Swadinata Padak and Padma Shri

লে. কর্ণেল (অব:) কাজী সাজ্জাদ আলী জহির (বীর প্রতীক) তাঁর বক্তব্যে বাংলাদেশের জাতীয় মানস ও চেতনায় বঙ্গবন্ধুর রাজনৈতিক দর্শনের প্রভাব ও নেতৃত্বের দৃঢ়তা সম্পর্কে আলোকপাত করেন।

তিনি বলেন, তিনি গত ১২ বছর ধরে, করোনার আগে পর্যন্ত বাংলাদেশের আলিয়া ও কওমি মাদ্রাসা, স্কুল, কলেজ ও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে প্রায় এক হাজার প্রোগ্রাম করেছেন, লেকচার দিয়েছেন বঙ্গবন্ধুর জীবনী নিয়ে। এসব প্রোগ্রামের মাধ্যমে বঙ্গবন্ধুকে বুঝার চেষ্টা করেছেন, অনুধাবন করার চেষ্টা করেছেন। ড দেলোয়ার হোসেন-এর উদ্বৃতি দিয়ে তিনি বলেন, বঙ্গবন্ধুর জীবনের একটা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয় ছিল Hope।

লে. কর্ণেল (অব:) কাজী সাজ্জাদ আলী জহির ব্যক্তিগত বর্ণনা দিয়ে শুরু করেন। তিনি বলেন, “আমি বঙ্গবন্ধুকে চিনতাম না। ৭ই মার্চের ভাষণ শুনেছিলাম, আলোচনা শুনেছিলাম, শুনেছিলাম তাকে হত্যা করা হবে। আমি তখন পাকিস্তানের



১৪ নম্বর প্যারাট্রুপ ব্রিগেডের একজন অফিসার। সিদ্ধান্ত নিলাম যুদ্ধে যাওয়ার। ‘যুদ্ধে যাইতাম, পাঞ্জাবি মারতাম’ এটাই ছিল তখন গ্রাম বাংলার শ্লোগান। জম্মু কাশ্মীর সীমান্ত অতিক্রম করে যুদ্ধে আসলাম। তখন আমার বয়স ছিল ২০ বছর।” জনাব জহির বলেন, বঙ্গবন্ধু কেমন ছিলেন তা একটু বুঝার চেষ্টা করি আমরা। ১৯৭১ ইজ দ্যা টার্নিং পয়েন্ট। Hope দিয়েছিলেন জাতিকে তিনি।

তিনি আবার বর্ণনা শুরু করলেন, “আমার জীবনের প্রথম অপারেশনের জন্য প্রস্তুত হলাম। আমি ১৪ নম্বর প্যারাট্রুপ ব্রিগেডের একজন অফিসার। আমাকে কমান্ডার বললেন, খুব বড় একটা অপারেশন করে তাক লাগিয়ে দাও। গর্ব ছিল একটা ভালো অপারেশন করবো। ১০ জন মুক্তিযুদ্ধা নিয়ে অপারেশনে যাচ্ছি। পরিকল্পনা ছিল রাতে পিছন দিয়ে আক্রমণ করবো; ক্ষয়ক্ষতি করবো, তারপর ফেরত চলে আসবো। Leave today for the battle of Tomorrow। গ্রামের পাশ দিয়ে যাচ্ছি। একটা গানও গাচ্ছিলাম মনে মনে, আজকে খুশির দিন আমার, আমার জাতির জন্য আমার প্রথম অবদান হতে পারে।

ডানদিকে দেখলাম একজন সাদা শাড়ি পড়া মহিলা গ্রামের রাস্তা দিয়ে দৌড়ে আসছেন একটা ছোট ছেলের পেছনে পেছনে। তারপর আমাদের দিকে চিৎকার করে বলছেন, বাজান, বাজান, দাড়াও, দাড়াও। আমি দাড়িয়ে গেলাম। মুক্তিযুদ্ধাদের বললাম, আপনার দাড়ান। আমার মা’র কোন অসুবিধা আছে। মহিলা হাপাচ্ছেন। আমি কাছে গিয়ে বললাম, মা, কোনো অসুবিধা আছে? তিনি বললেন, বাজান, কোনো অসুবিধা নাই। তোমাকে কিছু দিতে চাই। আমি বললাম, নিশ্চই দিবেন। আসলে দেওয়াটা ছিল খাবার দেওয়া।

আমাদের টাকা পয়সা ছিল না। খাওয়া দাওয়া, অপারেশনে যেতাম ওদের উপর ভর করে। এখন আমরা বড় কথা বলি। তারা বলে দিত, এ জায়গায় আমার ছেলে মেয়েরা খাবার দিয়ে আসবে, তোমরা গুলাগুলি কমলে এসে নিয়ে যেও। আমাদের বেঁচে থাকার রাস্তা ওইটাই ছিল।

আমি বললাম, নিশ্চই দিবেন মা। আমরা তো আপনার-ই সন্তান। তখন তিনি বললেন ছেলেটাকে দেখিয়ে, পোলাটা ডাঙর হয়ে গেছে। ওকে যুদ্ধে নিয়ে যাও। সে দেশ স্বাধীন করবে। ১৫ বছরের ছেলে, শুকনো। দারিদ্র্যের কষাঘাতে নিমজ্জিত। ছোট লুঙ্গি পরা যা গরিবরা পড়তো তখন। একটা ফতুয়া পড়া। অপুষ্টি আছে। আমি বললাম মা, ওতো ছোট ছেলে, এখন যুদ্ধে যেতে পারবে না। মহিলা বললেন, একথা মুখে এনো না বাজান, আমার ছেলে খুব সাহসী। রাতে অন্ধকারে গ্রামের রাস্তা দিয়ে একা হেটে যায়, ভূতের ভয় পায়না, খান সেনাদের কেনো ভয় পাবে? কি জোরে সাঁতার কাটে, কি জোরে দৌড়াতে পারে। দেশ স্বাধীন করবে, তাকে নিয়ে যাও। আমি বললাম মা, আপনার বাড়িতে কেউ আছে? তিনি বললেন, স্বামী মরে গেছে ৩ বছর আগে, একটা পোলা আছে। আত্মীয় স্বজন এখানে কেউ নেই। ছেলে মেয়ে কেউ নাই। আমি জিজ্ঞাসা করলাম, মা আপনি কি করেন? বললো, মাইনষের বাড়িতে কাম করি। আমি ভাবলাম, না না, বিধবার একমাত্র অবলম্বন নিয়ে গেলে গুণাহ হবে আমার। আবার গিয়ে বললাম, মা ওকে নিয়ে যান। সামনের বছর যখন বড়ো হবে, তখন যুদ্ধে নিয়ে যাবো, ইনশাআল্লাহ।

তখন মহিলা হাউমাউ করে কেঁদে দিলেন, চিৎকার করে বললেন, আল্লাহ গো, তোমারে কে মুক্তির কমান্ডার বানাইছে, তুমি তো শেখের বেটা’র হুকুম মানো না। শেখের বেটা ভাষণে বলেছে, আমিও শুনেছি, তোমাদের যার যা আছে তা দিয়ে শত্রুর মোকাবেলা করতে হবে। আমি মোকাবেলা করতে চাই। আমার তো টাকা পয়সা নাই, অস্ত্র নাই, পোলাটাকে দিতে চাই। তুমি শেখের বেটা’র হুকুম মানো না। তুমি মুক্তি অধিনায়ক কেমন করে হবে।

আমি চুপ করে দাড়িয়ে ছিলাম। কি বলবো। তিনি চোখের পানি মুছলেন। তারপর ছেলেটাকে আমার হাতে দিয়ে বললেন, বাজান, আর দুইমত কইরো না, নিয়া যাও, সে দেশ স্বাধীন করবে। আমার বড়ো কষ্ট হলো, আমি পাকিস্তানের

প্যারাট্রুপ ব্রিগেড অফিসার। প্যারা কমান্ডো ট্রেনিং। ট্যাংকের বিরুদ্ধে যুদ্ধ কিভাবে করতে হয় শিখেছি। মেশিন গান ফায়ার করতে শিখেছি। জিপসি ডাইভিং শিখে ফেলেছি, এ যুদ্ধ আমি জানতাম না। শেখের বেটা'র যুদ্ধ আমি জানতাম না।”

জনাব জহির মন্তব্য করেন, এ মহিলাকে জীবন কিছু দেয়নি, দিবেও না। দেশ স্বাধীন করলে তার কিছু হবে না, মানুষের বাসায় তাকে কাজ করতে হবে। কিন্তু সে তার একমাত্র সম্পদ দিয়ে দিয়েছে। এটাই কি মুক্তিযুদ্ধ? এই যুদ্ধটা আমি এই মহিলার কাছ থেকে শিখেছিলাম, বাকিটা যুদ্ধ করেছে।

লে. কর্ণেল (অব:) কাজী সাজ্জাদ আলী জহির আরও বলেন, আসলে বঙ্গবন্ধু আমাদের সাহস দিয়েছিলেন। Hope দিয়েছিলেন। আরেকটা কথা বলতে চাই আপনাদের সাথে।

“বঙ্গবন্ধুকে যখন গ্রেফতার করা হয়, তাকে কিন্তু হত্যা করার পরিকল্পনা করেছে সেটা আমি জানি। লেফটেনেন্ট কর্ণেল জেড এ খান, মেজর বিল্লাল হোসেন, ক্যাপ্টেন সাঈদ আহমেদ, সুবেদার ওয়াজীর খান বাইরের দরজাটা ভেঙ্গে ফেললেন লাথি মেরে। মেইন সিঁড়ির রাস্তার দরজা ভেঙ্গে ফেললো। চারিদিকে গুলাগুলি হচ্ছে। অন্য কেউ হলে হয়তো অন্য সেফ রুমে চলে যেতো। বঙ্গবন্ধু দৌড়িয়ে চলে আসলেন, দরজাটা খুলে ফেললেন। সিঁড়ির উপরে দাঁড়ালেন। তারা আসলো, গুলি বন্ধ করে তারা বঙ্গবন্ধুর সামনে আসলো। একটু চিন্তায় পরে গেছে। তখন বঙ্গবন্ধু চিৎকার করে বললেন, What do you want? সঙ্গে সঙ্গে সুবেদার ওয়াজীর খান সরে গিয়ে উনাকে প্রচণ্ড বেগে আঘাত করল।

বঙ্গবন্ধু প্রায় ৫ ফুট সাড়ে ১১ ইঞ্চি লম্বা একজন গর্বিত মানুষ। তিনি তাকে Counter Punch করতে পারতেন। কিন্তু তা করলে তখন তারা তাকে গুলি করে মেরে ফেলতো। কিন্তু বঙ্গবন্ধু তাদের এ চাপটা দিলেন না।”

বঙ্গবন্ধুকে তারা গ্রেফতার করে নিয়ে গেলো। একই ঘটনা কিন্তু হয়েছিল, যেটা মঞ্চ উপবিষ্ট মাননীয় ল' মিনিস্টার আমাদের থেকে ভালো জানেন, সেই ১৫ আগস্ট তারিখের রাতে।





মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী আমাকে জিজ্ঞাসা করেছিলেন, বাবাকে কেনো মারলো? আমি বললাম, নির্দেশ ছাড়া এ কমান্ডো ব্যাটালিয়ান কোনো কাজ করে না।

সেবার কিন্তু ছিল বাঙ্গালী-পাকিস্তানী, ক্যাপ্টেন বজলুল হুদা, নূর চৌধুরী, রিসালদার মুসলেম উদ্দিন এসেছিলেন, একইভাবে দরজা ভাঙলো, একইভাবে গুলি করল, কি সুন্দর পাকিস্তানিদের পরিকল্পনা! বঙ্গবন্ধু দৌড়ে এসে একই জায়গায় দাঁড়িয়েছেন। তারপর, উনি বললেন, What do you want? একই কথা। তাকে গুলি করা হল।

জনাব জহির বলেন, আমি বলি, He died with honour, glory। মাঝে মধ্যে আমাকে ডাকা হয় ভিয়াইপিদের ব্রিফিং করার জন্য। একবার চায়নার এক সিনিয়র মিনিষ্টার এসছিলেন। উনারা তো বঙ্গবন্ধুকে নিয়ে এতো চিন্তা করে না। তো আমি যখন তাঁকে জায়গায়টা দেখালাম, বঙ্গবন্ধুর ছবিটার সামনে, তিনি বললেন- Very large, I said, excellency, its significance is much larger. আমি যখন তাকে দেখালাম এ জায়গায় এ ঘটনা হয়েছে, চায়নার মিনিষ্টার বললেন, He is a Hero of the Heroes।

জনাব জহির উল্লেখ করেন যে, Leadership-এ দুটো জিনিসের দরকার হয়; চরিত্র এবং সাহসিকতা। বঙ্গবন্ধু ছিলেন তারই অনন্য সাধারণ নিদর্শন।

জনাব জহির আবারও ব্যক্তিগত বর্ণনা শুরু করেন, “ভূটো সাহেবের সাথে বঙ্গবন্ধুর Encounter প্রসঙ্গে আমি আরেকটি কথা বলতে চাই। বঙ্গবন্ধুকে লায়ালপুর জেল থেকে মিয়ানওয়ালী জেলে আনা হল। কারনটি হল, আমি মিয়ানওয়ালী জেলটি একবার দেখেছিলাম, পাশের গ্রামেই বেড়াতে গেছিলাম। আমার একজন ফ্রেন্ড ছিলো ওখানে। ওটা বেসিক্যালি পাঠানদের গ্রাম। সেই গ্রামটা জেলের ঠিক পাশেই। এটা ছিল নিয়াজীর গ্রামের বাড়ি। পাকিস্তানিরা চিন্তা করেছিল, যদি কোনো সময় Attack attempt হয়, rescue করার জন্য গ্রামের হাজার হাজার লোক, প্রত্যেকের অস্ত্র আছে, তারা বঙ্গবন্ধুকে নিয়ে যেতে দিবে না, আক্রমণ করবে। বঙ্গবন্ধুকে নিয়ে লায়ালপুর জেলে যখন ট্রায়ালটা শুরু হয় তখন ব্যারিষ্টার এ কে ব্রহি তার কাছে এসেছিলেন। সালাম দেয়ার পরে বঙ্গবন্ধু তাকে বললেন, ধন্যবাদ আপনাকে, এক মাস ধরে আমি কোন আদম সন্তানের সাথে কথা বলতে পারি নাই। ব্যারিষ্টার ব্রহি বললেন, জনাব মুজিব আপনি হয়তো জানেন না যে আপনাকে একটি কোর্ট মার্শাল প্রসিডিং-এর সম্মুখীন হতে হচ্ছে, আমি সে কোর্টের সাথে জড়িত। আমাকে পাঠানো হয়েছে জানতে যে আপনি কোনো Defence lawyer দিবেন কিনা। বঙ্গবন্ধু বললেন, চার্জশিটটা কি? মি: ব্রহি বললেন, দুটো মেইন চার্জশিট, একটি হলো-Waging war against Pakistan। ৭ ই মার্চের ভাষন যেখানে বঙ্গবন্ধু বলেছিলেন এবারের সংগ্রাম মুক্তির সংগ্রাম; তাদের ভাতে মারবো, পানিতে মারবো। দ্বিতীয়টি হলো Declaration of Independence। আজকে যারা অন্য তত্ত্ব প্রচার করে তাদের তা জানা দরকার। ব্রহি বললেন, এখন খুব সিরিয়াস ট্রায়াল হবে, আপনার অবস্থা ভালো না, এখন আপনি Defence lawyer ভালো দেখে দেন। ব্রহি ম্যাজিস্ট্রেট ছিলেন এবং এটর্নি জেনারেলও ছিলেন। খুব ভালো Lawyer ছিলেন ব্রহি। তিনি বললেন, জনাব মুজিব, একটা ভালো Lawyer এর নামে দেন, আমরা আপনাকে দিব।

বঙ্গবন্ধু বললেন, আমি কোনো Defence নিব না। ব্রহি বললেন, কেনো? বঙ্গবন্ধু বললেন, আমি একটি রাষ্ট্রের Democratically elected প্রধানমন্ত্রী। আমার Party আছে, আমার mandate আছে। এখন যদি আমি defence lawyer দেই, court-এ cooperate করি, তাহলে Marshal law court কে recognise করা হবে। ব্রহি সাহেব আবার বললেন, জনাব মুজিব, আমি আপনাকে defence করবো। তখন বঙ্গবন্ধু বললেন, Same is applicable for you, I want no defence.

যাই হউক, বঙ্গবন্ধু মিয়ানওয়ালী জেলে আসলেন, সেখান থেকে তাঁকে তার অজান্তে নিয়ে যাওয়া হয়েছিল সালওয়া গেস্ট হাউজে যা রাওয়াল পিন্ডি থেকে ৪৫ মাইল দূরে। এই গেস্ট হাউজে তিনি একটু আরামে শুতে পারলেন। বিছানা দেয়া হয়েছিল। একটি চেয়ার দেয়া হয়েছিল। এবং কিছু কাপড় চোপড় ছিলো। ভুট্টো সাহেব আসলেন সেখানে। থ্রিপিস স্যুট পরা। এসেই চেয়ারে বসলেন, সালাম দিয়ে বললেন, জনাব মুজিব, আপনি হয়তো জানেন না, এখন আমি পাকিস্তানের রাষ্ট্রপতি হয়ে গেছি। বঙ্গবন্ধু (Sense of Humor) হেসে বললেন, জনাব ভুট্টো, আপনি তো পরাজিত নেতা, রাষ্ট্রপতি হতে পারেন না। চেয়ারটা বোধ হয় আমার জন্য ছিল। যা হোক কি বলবেন আপনি? তখন ভুট্টো বললেন, আমি reproachment চাই। ভুট্টো সাহেব বলতে থাকলেন, আমি কী করতে পারি শুনুন। আমি আপনাকে এখান থেকে ছেড়ে দিতে পারি। আর কী করতে পারি, আপনি যা চান তাই করতে পারি, আপনি পাকিস্তানের রাষ্ট্রপতি হবেন, Yes, প্রধানমন্ত্রী হবেন Yes, ছয়দফা, Yes, Additional দফা থাকলে তাও মেনে নেব, শুধু Pakistan এর নামটা রাখেন। তখন বঙ্গবন্ধু বললেন, জনাব ভুট্টো এটা আপনে কেমন করে বলছেন? ভুট্টো সাহেব বললেন, এটা পাকিস্তানের কথা, আমি পাকিস্তানের পক্ষ থেকে আপনাকে বলছি। তখন বঙ্গবন্ধু হেসে দিয়ে বললেন, জনাব ভুট্টো, You will never amend yourself. এখানে বসে আপনে বলছেন আপনি elected, আপনি বলছেন আপনি Pakistan এর কথা বলেন, এখানে ফারাক আছে। আমি শেখ মুজিব জনগনের খাদেম ও প্রতিনিধি মাত্র। আমার জনগন কি করবে আমি জানি না। আমার জনগনের অনুমতি এবং নির্দেশনা ছাড়া আমি কিছুই করতে পারবো না।

তখন ভুট্টো সাহেব বললেন, আপনি কি বুঝতে পারছেন আপনার কত বিপদ আছে? বঙ্গবন্ধু বললেন, আমি বুঝতে পারছি আমার দিন শেষ হয়ে গেছে। সব আপনার উপরে ডিপেন্ড করছে, কিন্তু আমি একই কথা বলি, আমার জনগনের সিদ্ধান্ত। ভুট্টো সাহেব দীর্ঘ নিঃশ্বাস ছাড়লেন। আবার চিন্তা করে বসে রইলেন। তারপরে বললেন I am sorry. তখন বঙ্গবন্ধু জানতেন তার কবরটা খুঁড়া হয়েছিল। জেল ডেপুটি সুপার খুদা বক্স খান ব্যাপারটা বুঝলেন। ভুট্টো সাহেব চলে গেলেন।”

জনাব জহির উল্লেখ করেন, তারপরে ভুট্টো সাহেবদের সিদ্ধান্ত চেষ্টা কেন হলো, এ ঘটনাটা আমাদের জানতে হবে। আল্লাহ পাক বঙ্গবন্ধুকে বাঁচিয়ে রাখার পরিকল্পনা করেছেন তাই বেঁচে গেছেন। উনাকে Hang করার পরিকল্পনা ছিল। “স্ট্রাইক ফোর্স নর্থ এ গুজরানওয়ালী কোরে বিদ্রোহ হয়ে গেছিল। লেফটেন্যান্ট জেনারেল এস. ই. শামীম কমান্ডে ছিল। এটা ছিল গুল হাসানের Close group. ইতোমধ্যে ভুট্টো যখন রাষ্ট্রপতি হচ্ছেন তখন অনেকগুলো ব্যাপার হয়ে গিয়েছিল। Army’র মধ্যে ভাগ ছিল। আবদুল হামিদ বলছে আমি রাষ্ট্রপতি হবো, গুলহাসান বলছে আমি হবো। এক গ্রুপ বলছে নুরুল আমিনকে বানাও, নুরুল আমিন তখন Vice-President। এরকম অনেকগুলো ব্যাপার ছিল। তখন যে ঘটনাটা হলো, ভুট্টো সাহেব তখন বুঝলেন যে বঙ্গবন্ধু Hang হয়ে যাবে। স্ট্রাইক ফোর্স নর্থ-এ যখন বিদ্রোহ হয়, তখন Army Chief fail করলেন Negotiation করার জন্য। তারপরে গুলহাসান এরা সবাই গিয়ে শান্ত করলো শুধু। ভুট্টো দেখলেন তার পায়ের নিচে মাটি নাই। তখন তিনি গেলেন Army Headquarter-এ। সেখানে প্রায় ৭-৮শ জন অফিসার ছিলো। সেখানে বিশাল Auditorium এর মধ্যে তিনি বসেছেন। He thought ওনার একটা ক্যারিশমটিক ইমেজ আছে, ভালো স্পিকার তিনি, কনভিন্স করবেন। তিনি ঢুকে হেটে হেটে আসছেন। থ্রিপিস স্যুট পরা। কেউ তালি দিলনা, দাড়ালো না। পাকিস্তানে নিয়ম হচ্ছে, রাষ্ট্রপতি প্রধানমন্ত্রী আসলে তালি বাজায়। ভুট্টো সাহেব দাড়ালেন। দাড়িয়ে তিনি বললেন, আসসালামু আলাইকুম, My dear brothers, the best officers and soldiers of the world, the proud soldiers। অনেক কথা বললেন। তারপরে সঙ্গে সঙ্গে চতুর্থ রো থেকে একজন ফুল কর্ণেল। ওনার দাড়ি ছিল কালো, নামটা বের করতে পারিনি। পারবো ভবিষ্যতে হয়তো। চিৎকার করে বললেন, শারাবি প্রেসিডেন্ট নেহি চা তা হ্যা (শারাবি প্রেসিডেন্ট চাই



না)। ভীষণ চিৎকার করলেন, জোরে জোরে দুইবার। পুরো Auditorium এর মধ্যে গুমগুম আওয়াজ। ভুট্টো সাহেব কি করবেন বুঝতে পারছিলেন না। তিনি বললেন, আমি ক্ষমা চাচ্ছি। আমি শারাবি না, ছোট বেলায় ইংল্যান্ডে পড়াশোনা করেছি, ঠান্ডা লাগলে একটু শারাব খেয়েছি, দুই একটা পার্টিতে খেয়েছি, খোদা কি কসম, ছেড়ে দিব এখন। উনি ভাষণ দিলেন কিন্তু মনটা খারাপ ছিল। বের হয়ে আসলেন। অফিসে এসে দেখেন, Russian Prime Minister, Russian President সহ বহু বিশ্ব নেতাদের টেলিগ্রাম এসেছে। এগুলোতে লেখা, Don't kill Sheikh Mujib, release him। ভুট্টো সাহেবের Army'র সমর্থন নাই, জনগণের সাপোর্ট নাই, বিদেশী support নাই। সে কোথায় যাবে। অনেক Senator, Congressmen টেলিগ্রাম করছেন। He decided. বের হয়ে গেলেন। তারপরে ওই গেস্ট হাউজে একদিন পরে বঙ্গবন্ধুকে সকালবেলা নিয়ে যাওয়া হয়। ইসলামাবাদে কোন এয়ারপোর্ট ছিল, ইতিহাসে এটা ভুল লেখা হয়। যতটুকু জানা যায় রাওয়ালপিন্ডি পুলিশ এয়ারপোর্ট ছিল, ছোট এয়ারপোর্ট, সেখানে তিনি গেলেন। উনাকে গাড়ি থেকে নামানো হলো।



এটা খুব ইন্টারেস্টিং ঘটনা। যখন নামানো হলো, বঙ্গবন্ধু গাড়ি থেকে একাই নেমেছেন। ভুট্টো সাহেবের বার্ষডে ছিল আগের দিন। ভুট্টো সাহেব সেলিব্রেট করেছেন লারকানাত। জাফর চৌধুরিকে নিয়ে আসলেন, হেলিকপ্টারে নামলেন, এসে দাড়ালেন। যদুর গুনেছি আরেকটা গাড়িতে সম্মানিত কামাল হোসেন, হামিদা হোসেনও এসে দাড়িয়েছিলেন পেছনে। ভুট্টো সাহেব এসে দাড়ালেন। সালাম জানালেন, প্লেনটা তখন দাড়িয়ে আছে দূরে। ভুট্টো সাহেব আবার বলছেন, জনাব মুজিব প্লেনটা আছে। আপনি চলে যাবেন এখন, কিন্তু আমার এ কথাটায় রাজি হয়ে যান। প্লিজ, I thank you for the departure, কিন্তু ওই কথাটা দিয়ে যান, We will keep one Pakistan Alive. কিন্তু বঙ্গবন্ধু একই কথা বললেন, আমার জনগণ। ভুট্টো সাহেব তখন কি বললেন, ইউনিক কথা বলি একটা। জাফর ইশারা করলেন। বড়ো একটা প্যাকেট নিয়ে আসলেন। তখন ভুট্টো সাহেব বঙ্গবন্ধুর দিকে হাত বাড়ালেন। কথিথ আছে, ভুট্টোর সঙ্গে হ্যাড শেক করতে হয় না।



হ্যান্ড শেক করলে পরে আবার আঙ্গুল গুনতে হয়। সবগুলি আঙ্গুল আছে কিনা। Not reliable। বঙ্গবন্ধু জিজ্ঞাসা করলেন, প্যাকেটে কি আছে? ভুট্টো সাহেব বললেন, জনাব মুজিব only fifty thousand dollars। আপনি লন্ডনে যাবেন, পরিবারের জন্য গিফট কিনবেন, খরচ আছে অনেক। এটা তোহফা, আমার brotherly gift। বঙ্গবন্ধু তখনো বললেন, It is better to be with you। ভুট্টো সাহেব ইশারা করলেন, প্লেন স্টার্ট দিল, তখন তিনি সরে গেলেন।“

জনাব সাজ্জাদ আলি জহির তাঁর বক্তব্যের সমাপ্তিতে বলেন, অনেকগুলো ব্যাপার আছে জীবনে যেগুলোতে বঙ্গবন্ধু একাই সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েছিলেন। সিদ্ধান্তগুলো জাতির জন্য ভালো ছিল। পরিশেষে, একটা কথা বলতে চাই, চলুন আমরা চেতনা জাগ্রত করি। বিবেককে জাগ্রত করি। ঘুমন্ত আত্মাকে জাগ্রত করি এবং ইতিহাসের মুখোমুখি হই। ইতিহাস হবে বাংলার ইতিহাস, যার মধ্যে আছে বঙ্গবন্ধুর জীবন ইতিহাস। ইতিহাস চর্চা করি। সবাই মিলে একটা ভালো দেশ গড়ে তুলি, বিভাজন থেকে দূরে থাকি, একত্রে বসবাসের চেষ্টা করি, আজকে বিজ্ঞ আলোচকরা যেটা বললেন, সেটা হলো একত্রে বসবাসের কথা, Friendship to all malice towards none. সবাইকে ধন্যবাদ জানিয়ে তিনি তাঁর বক্তব্য সমাপ্ত করেন।





## PRESENTATION TWO

### *International System and Just World: The Ideas of Bangabandhu*



#### **Professor Dr Syed Anwar Husain**

Bangabandhu Chair Professor, Bangladesh University of Professionals

**Dr Syed Anwar Husain**, Bangabandhu Chair Professor, Bangladesh University of Professionals, started his speech by stating that, the quest for peace, at any level, is perpetual and universal. Nevertheless, Peace is set at naught by human misdeeds, or human deeds with ulterior motives not peaceable. Chenghiz Khan, Halaku Khan and Hitler do occasionally surface in people's mind as evil geniuses who threatened humanity and world peace. But, as against them, humanity also have on record the names of personalities for whom peace was not only a dream, but vocation as well; a short list of whom include the English scholar Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and German scholar Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Bentham's book *A Plan for Universal and Perpetual Peace* (1777) and Kant's book *Perpetual Peace* (1795), drew attention of a strife-torn Europe to the doable prospect of

peace. Dr Husain stated Bangabandhu belonged to this genre of persons with his peace dream and vocation, not only for his Bangali people, but the people across the world. A pointer to such a peace intent of Bangabandhu is the note he scribbled on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1973,

“As a man, what concerns mankind concerns me. As a Bengalee, I am deeply involved in all that concerns Bengalees. This abiding involvement is born of and nourished by love, enduring love, which gives meaning to my politics and to my very being.”

Bangabandhu's views on the international system are to be gleaned from the 1972 Constitution (his major gift to the nation), nine speeches and a message. Moreover, Bangabandhu's travelogue titled *New China 1952* also provides information specifically on his views on a just world. But the information of his attending the Stockholm Peace Conference (1956) is not available. Nevertheless, whatever records are present, are adequately explanatory of Bangabandhu's ideas specifically on peace, and world peace, in general.

He then focused on theoretical considerations. He said that Bangabandhu knew it well that his Bangladesh, a country born out of the trauma of conflict and violence, would live well in the comity of nations provided there were peace through peaceable overtures between and among states. Thus his peace-intention was, to all intents and purposes, Bangladesh-centric. In other words, he was perceiving an international civil society, wherein a network of states would complement each other's actions in creating and sustaining peace. This was, in fact, a redefining of international peace in terms of people's security. This was thus the recipe for a paradigm shift in international relations. It may be noted that this peace-paradigm was a continuation of Bangabandhu's home-recipe of peace through development of people; and, in this context, his Rajshahi speech of 9 May 1972 may be referred to, wherein he said, “What do I want? I want the people of Bangla get two square meals a day. What do I want? I want the jobless get jobs. What do I want? I want the people of my Bengal be happy. What do I want? I want my people move about in a jolly mood. What do I want? I want the people of Bangla smile again to their hearts content”. Indeed, for Bangabandhu, peace was indivisible between domestic and international arenas. He was convinced that if people, both at home and the world across, are marginalised or victims of oppression and violence, peace would be negated or even threatened. The egalitarian international society that Bangabandhu was dreaming for had the perspective of gap reduction in resources between the



international haves and have-nots. In other words, he was voicing protest against the endemic and persistent international inequality. Indeed, Bangabandhu was a strong voice of protest against inequality of all types anywhere in the world. The first government of Bangladesh, popularly known as the Mujibnagar Government, had in its Proclamation of Independence, three perceptive objectives for Bangladesh: equality, human dignity and social justice. It would be not far-fetched to argue that Bangabandhu's world-view was conditioned by these three objectives. Indeed, he was not only the Bangabandhu (friend of Bengal); but viswabandhu (friend of the world) as well. The Constitution and World Peace enshrined in the Article 25 of the 1972 Constitution are the words laying the foundation of Bangladesh foreign policy as well as that of world view of the newly-born state. The state shall base its international relations on the principles of respect for national sovereignty and equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, peaceful settlement of international disputes, and respect for international law and the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter, and on the basis of those principles shall —a. strive for the renunciation of the use of force in international relations and for general and complete disarmament; b. uphold the right of every people freely to determine and build up its own social, economic and political system by ways and means of its own free choice; and c. support oppressed people throughout the world waging a just struggle against imperialism, colonialism or racialism. The goals set and the elaborative principles clearly show the peace intent and content of Bangladesh's relations with the outside world. Moreover, Bangabandhu's principle of "friendship with all, malice to none"; was a peace-begetting recipe.

Dr Husain then focused on Bangabandhu's contribution to International Social Peace". He argued that the most pertinent document relating to Bangabandhu's knack for international social peace through social justice was his speech at the 4<sup>th</sup> Nonaligned Summit in Algiers. In that speech he uttered the knee-jerking words (for imperialists and colonialists), "The world is divided into two halves – oppressors and oppressed. I am on the side of the oppressed". This comment of Bangabandhu not only reflected his world view, but also pointed out that an end to oppression across the world was the pathway to peace. Moscow hosted the World Congress of Peace Forces, held from 25 through 31 October 1973. In a message to this congress, sounding the Algiers rhetoric, he wrote,

"At a time when people in different parts of the world are struggling against imperialism, colonialism and racialism and are striving for political and economic emancipation, such a Congress cannot but

strengthen and inspire all those committed to the cause of world peace. The oppressed people of the world must liberate themselves from exploitation and man's injustice to man must end if the world is to enjoy a stable peace.”

While drawing attention to the basics of world peace, Bangabandhu said, “In my opinion, people must have the right to food and clothing and to demand these things. At the same time, they must have the rights to express their own beliefs. If this is not allowed, the life of a man will become as hard as a stone.”

The People's Republic of China (PRC) hosted the Asia-Pacific Regional Peace Conference in Peking on 2-12 October 1952. 37 countries participated in this conference. Bangabandhu was a member of the Pakistan delegation. He rationalised world peace as he subsequently wrote,

“We were agreeable to the idea of attending a conference organised by anyone in the world who wanted peace. Whether it was Russia, the United States, Britain or China – we were ready to work for peace at this time and to proclaim in unison with thousands voices – Peace is what we want”

But Bangabandhu's voice of peace was heard more forcefully in his emotive speech delivered at the time of his receiving the Julio Curie Peace Prize from the World Peace Council at a ceremony held in Dhaka on 23 May 1973. As he said, for the people of Bangladesh peace and freedom are mixed up. Moreover, emphasising world peace, he unequivocally said,

“At the same time, I would like to mention categorically that world peace is the basic principle of the philosophy of my life... We support any great attempt at world peace, disarmament and human welfare.”





The Commonwealth Heads of government meeting was held in Canada on 2-3 August 1973. At this meeting, Bangabandhu's voice was resonant, he believed that the developed and developing countries have a common interest in maintaining our existence and in living peacefully. He said that "The arms race is a threat to humanity, which contains the threat of not only the total destruction, but also a colossal wastage of world resources." This was a message to big powers who spend a lot on the arms-making; and the message fell on their deaf years, as we have not seen any let-up in the arms-making and armed conflict around the world. True, big arms have now been replaced by the smaller ones, but arms are there eating up huge national resources." In such a context, therefore, the voice of Bangabandhu was of restraint and caution, but at the same time, suggesting a doable alternative.

Bangabandhu's United Nations General Assembly speech at the 29<sup>th</sup> session (25 September 1974) was the summation of his ideas on world peace. The speech was in Bangla; and Bangabandhu was second to Rabindranath Thakur in portraying Bangla on the international stage. The speech was rendered into English extemporaneously by the young Bangali diplomat Faruk Chowdhury (now deceased). Thematically, the speech had



four parts. First, the liberation struggle of Bangladesh was meant to be a struggle for peace and justice across the world. Second, crafting of a new international order conducive to the common interest of humans was proffered. Third, while talking about the desired peace in the conflict-prone South Asian region, a concrete suggestion was made to replace “conflict and animus of the past with those of fraternity and cooperation”, Finally, the Southeast Asian Zone of Peace along with the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace was strongly supported. The South Asian peace figured prominently as Bangabandhu had spoken emotively at the dinner hosted by the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in Calcutta on 6 February (on Bangabandhu's first foreign trip to Calcutta, 6-8 February 1972). As he said, “Let there be an end permanently to the sterile policy of conflict among the neighbours. We should not waste our national resources, which we should use in developing standard of living of our people”. The same theme occurred in the speech he delivered at Daudkandi (Cumilla) on 4 March 1974. These statements were the seeds out of which germinated the tree known as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985.

In his concluding observations, he said that the cruel birth of Bangladesh and the continuous struggle for emancipation preceding this birth, had convinced Bangabandhu of the rationale for peace, at home and across the world. At home, his recipe for peace was development of his people, so that they are blessed with a decent standard of living. Internationally, he had the same dream, and, for the realisation of which, he argued for a restructured world order. In between, he had plans for regional peace, as well. Thus no facet of the phenomenon/construct of peace escaped the cogitative mind of Bangabandhu.





## PRESENTATION THREE

### *Foreign Policy and Diplomacy: The Principles of Bangabandhu*



#### **Ambassador (Retd) Muhammad Zamir**

Former Chief Information Commissioner of Bangladesh

At the outset of his presentation, Ambassador (Retd) Muhammad Zamir conveyed his deep homage to Bangabandhu, all his family members, and those who passed away on August 15, 1975. He also remembered those who lost their lives on August 21, 2004, from the attack carried out to assassinate Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He then thanked BIIS for hosting a wonderful discussion on Bangabandhu and inviting some very significant people to share their opinion.

Ambassador Zamir shared that he had the honour of knowing Bangabandhu when he was a Class VIII student in Narinda, where he used to live in 1958. Bangabandhu came to visit his father along with Mr Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, who was a very close friend

of his father. Ambassador Zamir and his family shifted from Narinda to Dhanmondi in January 1965. By September 1965, the war between India and Pakistan had already started. One day, he was going for swimming in the pool of the University of Dhaka. Bangabandhu called him for a chat and talked about the war. He appointed Ambassador Zamir as the Civil Defence Warden in Dhanmondi. Bangabandhu asked him to patrol the areas around the Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi Road No. 2, Satmasjid Road, and Dhanmondi Road No. 27 on a cycle and make sure that children were not playing on the road. This demonstrates Bangabandhu's affection for children. One day, the then Secretary General of Bangladesh Awami League call him over the phone and wanted to make a plan for Bangabandhu's birthday on March 17. Ambassador Zamir felt that it would be the perfect day to do something for the children of the country. Therefore, March 17, the birthday of Bangabandhu, is also celebrated as Children's Day in Bangladesh. He reiterated that Bangabandhu would always think about people's well-being and betterment.

Later, Ambassador Zamir and his wife sought political asylum in London from Egypt. Bangabandhu asked him to go from London to Moscow to Dhaka instead and delegated him to oversee the India desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. People in the Indian High Commission, including J N Dixit, Sati Lambah, Arundhati Ghose and Chandrashekhar Dasgupta had a conception that people from the Hindu community had the right to visit the Indian High Commission for passing the complaints they had. Ambassador Zamir questioned why they would not go to the police stations in Bangladesh as it is a sovereign state. Bangabandhu supported him and boldly responded to the people from Indian High Commission when they went to him. He called Ambassador Zamir, made him the Chef de Cabinet and asked Mr Mohammad Hanif (who later became the Mayor of Dhaka) to accompany him. The presenter reiterated that he learnt a lot from Bangabandhu by being close to him. When Bangabandhu told J N Dixit about the misconception of the Indian High Commission mentioned above, many other high-profile politicians of Bangladesh were also present there, including Tajuddin Ahmad, General M A G Osmani, and Samad Azad (Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh).

Ambassador Zamir shared that, in February 1972, Bangabandhu went to Kolkata and spoke in front of people at the Brigade Parade Ground, known as Gorer Math. Ambassador Salman Haidar, Private Secretary of Indira Gandhi, informed Ambassador Zamir that, Bangabandhu went up to Ms Gandhi and said, "You have done a lot for us; but it now time to take back the Indian soldiers from Bangladesh." In the next room, there were P N Haksar, D P Dhar and Salman Haidar. Ms Gandhi told them what Bangabandhu



had said and added that he invited her to Bangladesh. She made a plan to be in Dhaka on March 15, two days ahead of his birthday, and to agree with him on taking back all the Indian soldiers. She thought that it would be a good birthday present for Bangabandhu. However, she also highlighted that there were 93,000 Prisoners of War (POWs) who should also be allowed to go back. She came to Bangladesh, met Bangabandhu and thanked him. Bangabandhu replied that Bangladeshis greatly admired what India had done for Bangladesh. But there was something else which was bothering the countrymen. Pakistan had been saying that there was no need to recognise Bangladesh because it was ultimately going to be a province of India. Eventually, the soldiers and the POWs went back. But Bangabandhu did not stop there. On April 17, 1973, after completion of the investigation of crimes committed by the Pakistani occupation forces and their auxiliaries, it was decided to try 195 persons for serious crimes, which included genocide, war crime, crime against humanity (as per the Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions), along with murder, rape and arson. It was also decided that the trials of such persons and others associated in planning and executing those crimes would be held in accordance with universally recognised judicial norms. Ambassador Zamir referred to the speech of H E Mr Anisul Huq, MP, who informed the audience how the process was stopped after the brutal assassination of Bangabandhu in 1975 but restarted and necessary steps were taken under the leadership of the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh, H E Sheikh Hasina. Mr Huq himself played an important role here.



In the context of Foreign Policy, it was very interesting that by March 26, 1972, after Indira Gandhi had come and left and the soldiers had been withdrawn, 54 countries from Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America recognised Bangladesh. But this recognition factor was further taken forward by various dimensions when on November 27, 1972, the United Nations (UN) Secretary General Dr Kurt Waldheim came to Dhaka and had a long discussion with Bangabandhu, although Bangladesh was not yet a member of the UN. More than 10 million people had left Bangladesh, had gone across the border as refugees in India and they were coming back. Dr Waldheim came to discuss about that, and also about nearly 401,000 (four hundred and one thousand) people of Bangladeshi origin who were in internment in various parts of Pakistan. They discussed on how to bring them back. The question came up about the people of Bihari origin who wanted to go back to Pakistan but were not able to do so. At that time, Sadruddin Aga Khan, the then UN High Commissioner for Refugees came to Bangladesh. Bangabandhu asked Ambassador Zamir to go to the Tejgaon airport and receive him. That is how the process of repatriation started through the UN Relief Operations Dacca (UNROD). Two very eminent persons from the UN came to Dhaka—Kofi Annan, who was then a P5 Officer at the UNHCR, and Sérgio Vieira de Mello, who was the P2 Officer at the UNHCR, and later became the Under Secretary General and was also supposed to be the Secretary General but was murdered in Baghdad.

Ambassador Zamir discussed that many people came to Bangabandhu at the Ganabhaban one day and asked why, despite being a Muslim country, Bangladeshis were not allowed by Saudi Arabia to go and perform Umrah or Hajj. Bangabandhu was a very sincere Muslim. Ambassador Zamir himself saw Bangabandhu regularly saying his Asr and Maghrib prayers. Therefore, when the opportunity came, Bangabandhu understood the denotations and connotations of it and captured it. On October 6, 1973, when Egypt under General Saad el-Shazly, the Chief of General Staff and the Syrian Armed Forces launched two fronts against Israel, Bangabandhu called a meeting. General Osmani also came because he was in charge of tea which was previously being exported to Pakistan but then it was stranded because no country was buying it. There were thousands of leftover wooden boxes filled with tea. Bangabandhu remembered that Ambassador Zamir once told him about the Egyptians' love for tea. So, he asked General Osmani to hire a plane and added that a six-member medical team along with Ambassador Zamir would carry six tonnes of tea. At that time, there was no aeroplane of Bangladesh Civil Aviation. Bangladesh hired a plane from the British Caledonian Airways. Captain Macintosh, a Scottish person, flew it. They were supposed to fly directly to Cairo; however, it was not



possible since the war was still going on. So, it had to fly to Turkey first, then to Libya. When the plane landed in Benghazi, the tea was sent to Cairo over land, and the medical team was sent through the sea.

The action of Bangabandhu made King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, the *Shahen Shah* of Kuwait and everyone else asked Bhutto why he was not letting Bangladesh to be a part of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (then 'Conference'). Its summit was going to take place in Lahore in February 1974. Bhutto sent a team to Bangladesh, including the Foreign Minister of Algeria and Sheikh Sabah Al-Sabah, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kuwait who later became the Emir. Bangabandhu expressed that three things had to be done before he would agree to go to Pakistan—when Bangabandhu would come down from the plane, the flag of Bangladesh must be hoisted; the national anthem of Bangladesh must be played; and the Guard of Honour must be provided. The plane was provided by Algeria and ten members including Ambassador Zamir went to Lahore. In the summit, Bangabandhu met all the leaders including Mohammad Reza Pahlavi from Iran. He decided to open an embassy in Iran and sent Ambassador Zamir there. He was also in charge of Turkey from there. Ambassador Zamir emphasised how these incidents reflect the farsightedness of Bangabandhu.

Ambassador Zamir opined that everyone should have a copy of Bangabandhu's speech at the 29th session of UN General Assembly (UNGA) on September 25, 1974. Through this speech, he shared what steps or measures should be undertaken. Those steps are now being undertaken by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Ambassador Zamir also helped Bangabandhu during the reconstruction effort of Bangladesh after 1972. Bangabandhu was very fond of Khana, the great agricultural thinker of this subcontinent, and would often make reference to her observations pertaining to the matrix of agriculture. Farming was used for food recovery and improving the economic livelihood in the war-devastated Bangladesh. In this context, reference was drawn to particular types of livestock and poultry—cows, bullocks, goats, ducks and pigeons. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also stresses on the importance of agriculture. Khana referred to particular types of vegetables and how they could help a farmer. Bangabandhu emphasised on the cultivation of Mango which led to its enormous production in Rajshahi. At different times, farmers pointed out to him that they were having difficulties in finding necessary assistance with regard to fertilisers for the crops during his visits outside Dhaka. He did not hesitate to refer to Khana and discuss her reference to organic fertilisers—not only of cow dung but also of ash, rotten leaves and grass. Bangabandhu's references influenced Ambassador Zamir to

write a book on Khana from the Bangla Academy of which 25,000 copies has been sold. He concluded his speech by thanking the audience and added that he had learnt a lot from the event.





## PRESENTATION FOUR

### *Global Economic Order: The Philosophies of Bangabandhu*



#### **Dr Atiur Rahman**

Bangabandhu Chair Professor, University of Dhaka

At the beginning, **Dr Atiur Rahman**, Bangabandhu Chair Professor, University of Dhaka paid his tribute to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib, martyrs who were killed on August 15, 1975, as well as all the freedom fighters of the liberation war and the Bengali language movement. He stated that the discussion on Bangabandhu's economic philosophy and the global economic order is very pertinent today. At this moment, the whole world is going through an economic crisis. It is true particularly for Europe and Africa. The global economy had to sustain inflation at a time when the supply chain was heavily disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the Russo-Ukrainian war took place. Today's inflation has much to do with this supply chain disruption, an increase in transport and import costs, and the high price

of fuel. When Bangabandhu took up the mission of reconstructing Bangladesh, a similar kind of economic crisis was taking place. Fuel price increased all on a sudden and US President Richard Nixon withdrew United States (US) from the Smithsonian Agreement. Bangabandhu took a number of initiatives to save the economy of Bangladesh at this crisis moment. It not only reconstructed the national economy but also stabilised it and the inflation rate was almost reduced to half. But all of this was put to an end by Bangabandhu's assassination in 1975.

Dr Rahman stated that Bangabandhu was a creative leader who also helped others dream. Professor James Manor, in his speech titled "Understanding Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman" at SOAS, University of London on April 10, 2018, pointed out three reasons why Bangabandhu stood out among many other leaders who were also fathers of their nations: Firstly, he was a true secular leader, not an "ethnic nationalist." He dropped the word "Muslim" from the name of his party to incorporate people from all religion. This is why, Amartya Sen has recently said in a webinar organised by the London School of Economics that Bangabandhu was a global friend (*Viswabandhu*) in all respect because he did not want to mix up religion and politics. He wanted to prevent the misuse of religion which is a global problem. Secondly, he emphasised on building organisations at the grass roots. He also left the position of Minister to serve as the General Secretary of the party. Thirdly, he was always open for dialogues and negotiations and not a "hot headed" agitator. He welcomed his enemies with a smiling face even after the war had started.

Dr Rahman mentioned that "society without exploitation" was at the core of Bangabandhu's development philosophy. Common people were his priorities. On December 15, 1973, Bangabandhu uttered with valour, "This independence will be meaningful to me only when the woes of the farmers, laborers and the deprived of Bangladesh end." In 1974, he spoke at Rajshahi Madrasa premises and mentioned that he wanted to build a Bangladesh where everyone would be able to eat, young people would have the opportunity to work, children would play happily, and mothers would smile. He dreamt of a Bangladesh free of deprivation.

Bangabandhu walked on his own foot for balanced development. Dr Rahman echoed Ambassador Zamir who explained how Bangabandhu had always stressed on agriculture to provide food for huge population. Agriculture would supply raw material for industries and fulfil the demand for goods. Therefore, agriculture and industry received 24 per cent



and 20 per cent of the First Five Year Plan (FYP) allocations, respectively. Bangabandhu's strategy for industrialisation had to be state led because all the major industrialists were in Pakistan and there was nobody to take initiatives for Bangladesh. He wanted to protect local industries through the state. However, at the same time, the first FYP emphasised on creating enabling environment for private sector. The ceiling for private investment increased from BDT2.5 million to BDT30 million in FY1974-75, and 133 abandoned units were handed over to the private sector. He made a plan which could incorporate the state and the private sector together.

He was well-aware of the resource constraints. Nevertheless, he was committed to building institutions, infrastructures and human capitals for attaining inclusive development. Within less than four years, Bangladesh's per capita income almost tripled—from US\$93 in 1972 to US\$272.75 in 1975. In 1976, it went down to US\$138.59; and in 1977, it decreased to US\$128.81. It took 13 years to go back to the level that Bangabandhu attained.

When Bangabandhu was at the helm of newly independent Bangladesh, the developing world was facing a lot of challenges. Bangabandhu believed that economic freedom had to be secured without sacrificing political freedom and economic growth had to be achieved without sacrificing social justice. Dr Rahman opined that Bangabandhu guided global leadership along a prudent path. At the Commonwealth Summit in Ottawa, August 1973, Bangabandhu said,

“If the export earnings of such countries must be expanded, intending to promote self-reliance, the rich countries must help them to meet the threat of substitutes effectively. This calls for research, the development of new uses of raw material, and increased productivity and technological innovation.”

Bangabandhu also rightly identified “self-reliance” and “economic cooperation” among the non-aligned countries as the ways forward. At the same summit, Bangabandhu pointed out,

“We appreciate the arguments for forming a common market among the rich countries of Europe. We in the developing world must exploit similar opportunities for cooperation and specialisation, including

trade liberalisation, among ourselves to expand exports to each other's markets."

Today, globalisation is facing a major threat. Due to the Ukraine war, the mobility of labour and goods is almost at a standstill compared to the last three decades. Dr Rahman informed the audience how Bangabandhu prudently addressed global disparities. Bangabandhu said,

"We recognise that disparities between the poor and the rich countries cannot be eliminated overnight or indeed for a long time to come, but what is imperative is that the international community should recognise the responsibility of ensuring a critical minimum rate of growth of between six to seven percent per annum in the poor countries... One might argue about the pros and cons of various methods of accomplishing such an objective, but none can argue against the objective itself."

Bangabandhu was a global leader with farsighted foreign policy. He was very much aware of the geopolitical tension of the Cold War. Yet he envisaged Bangladesh as the "Switzerland of the East" and worked for regional and global peace. Dr Rahman read out a few lines from Bangabandhu's speech at the United Nations (UN) on September 25, 1974,

"... We can look forward to a world where human creativity and the great achievements of our age in science and technology will be able to shape a better future free from the threat of nuclear war and based upon sharing of technology and resources on a global scale, so that men everywhere can begin to enjoy the minimal conditions of a decent life."





Dr Rahman opined that Bangabandhu's economic philosophy is still guiding the world amid the current global financial crisis. Overcoming a lot of global geopolitical and economic challenges, Bangladesh is advancing along the path shown by Bangabandhu, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. After facing the COVID-19 crisis effectively, Bangladesh is doing relatively much better than most other countries in coping with the economic crises induced by the Russo-Ukrainian war and the strengthening of US Dollar following the tightening of US monetary policy. Agriculture had a major impact here. Dr Rahman added that the fighting spirit instilled by Bangabandhu is Bangladesh's greatest social capital. When Indira Gandhi came to Bangladesh, she told many people, "You have Bangabandhu. What are you afraid of?" After all these years, his economic philosophy, his teachings of equity are the most precious capitals for the people of Bangladesh. He hoped that Bangladesh would be able to overcome the current challenges utilising that capital.

Dr Rahman mentioned that Bangabandhu was an eternal optimist. He was able to reduce inflation from 62 per cent to around 30 per cent. On March 26, 1975, while declaring the programme of the Second Revolution, Bangabandhu said,

“This situation will not persist for long. We are the people of Bangladesh; we have soil, we have ‘golden Bengal,’ we have jute, natural gas, forests, fisheries, and livestock. If we can develop, In sha Allah this situation will improve. Today, you [developed countries] are taking advantage and increasing the shipping cost. Prices of commodities are rising. And we are forced to buy them. We die of hunger; we suffer from inflation; we are unable to live...”

He also said, “Bangladesh has been born into this World. Bangladesh has come to stay. None can destroy it.”

Dr Rahman finished his speech with a poem by Mahadeb Saaha dedicated to Bangabandhu,

“আমি আমার সমস্ত কবিত্ব শক্তি উজাড় করে  
যে-কবিতা লিখেছি তার নাম শেখ মুজিব,  
এই মুহূর্তে আর কোনো নতুন কবিতা লিখতে পারবো না আমি  
কিন্তু এই যে প্রতিদিন বাংলার প্রকৃতিতে ফুটেছে নতুন ফুল  
শাপলা-পদ্ম-গোলাপ, সেই গোলাপের বুক জুড়ে  
ফুটে আছে মুজিবের মুখ  
এদেশের প্রতিটি পাখির গানে মুজিবের প্রিয় নাম শুনি,  
মনে হয় এরা সকলেই আমার চেয়ে আরো বড়ো কবি  
শেখ মুজিবের নামে প্রতিদিন লেখে তারা নতুন কবিতা।”



## OPEN DISCUSSION



**Air Cdre (Retd) Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury** said that the discussion that is missing is Bangabandhu's vision regarding defence. He said that Bangabandhu was for peace, but he believed in peace with strength. And this was reflected in the very first when on 5/6th February 1972, he raised the issue of removal of Indian troops from the country. He said that this was a huge task logistically because, at that time, three or four battalion Indian troops were there the air force was there along with the prisoners of war. But Bangabandhu ensures that the last troops left Bangladesh before the Prime Minister's arrival. He said that Bangabandhu had said that before the parade of 26th March 1972, the Indian troops will leave. He said that he is raising these issues because before the 15 August assassinations, many blamed Bangabandhu that there were Indian elements in Bangladesh, and he was loyal to India. But Bangabandhu was the one who raised the Farakka issue during the Bangladesh-India meeting and signed an agreement on enclaves. Unfortunately, that was not solved up until recent years under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and all the occupied lands have also been returned to Bangladesh. Another thing that Bangabandhu is blamed for is the creation of the Rokkhi Bahini, Air

Commodore Ishfaq said that being in the military, he used to think that Rokkhi Bahini had Indian soldiers in it, and a lot of people of Bangladesh were also misinformed that the Rokkhi bahini was created to control the army. But after the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, Rokkhi Bahini completely merged with the army, and those who had spread the propaganda against Rokkhi Bahini came to control it and many of his friends who are now Major Generals and Brigadiers of the Bangladesh army actually come from Rokkhi Bahini. Bangabandhu is also responsible for the sea demarcation of Bangladesh, long before India or many other countries. Bangabandhu also emphasised on defence. During his first visit to Russia he signed an agreement and Bangladesh got Russian aircraft as a result. During the famine of 1974, those aircraft were useful for Bangladesh. Lastly, he said that if one analyses the 1972 budget, it can be seen that 1.5% of the GDP was allocated to defence, a number that still remains constant today. So, those who blame Bangabandhu for the situation before 15<sup>th</sup> August are extremely wrong and must be condemned.



**Abul Hasan Chowdhury**, former State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, at the outset, paid his deep respect to the greatest Bangali of all time, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib and all other members of the Mujib family who had lost their lives during the brutal assassination of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1975. He said that, he is also thankful that the country got back the honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He said that he does not have the ability to discuss anything



new outside what he has learned from the panellists. He then raised two points that he thinks are extremely pertinent. He said that at the time when Bangladesh had to begin its liberation war, the world was very different, it was totally polarised between the Soviet Union and its followers and the US and its followers.

He also said that he himself was a witness of the tremendous ground-level support for Bangladesh in India, in Europe and even in the US where there was the obnoxious administration of Nixon and Kissinger. He also mentioned the support of corporate America, the bipartisan support in congress, the media and the concert in madison square. Even as a teenager, he thought how that was possible. Now, he believes that it was possible because of the vision of Bangabandhu. He said that the universality of Bangabandhu's vision has come across many times and people could identify with his vision because Bangladesh was de jure recognised, it had such great support from the people of the west.

He gave another example which had never happened before. The example was that long before 16<sup>th</sup> December victory day, sometime in the mid-August, the conservative government of the UK allowed the opening of the Bangladesh mission in London with its own flag. Pakistan had called the UK government and threatened to walk out of the Commonwealth, but the UK government did not take any action and Pakistan ended up walking out of the commonwealth club.

He then mentioned an incident that he had not talked about before. He said that at the beginning of the 80s, Sheikh Hasina had a meeting with Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in London. Prime Minister had asked Ms Bhutto that both their fathers were elected leaders so how could then Pakistan's Prime Minister recognise the government of Bangladesh who was responsible for Bangabandhu's (her father's) murder? Bhutto had no answer, she promptly told a lie that her father was sobbing like a child, Pakistan's foreign ministry was responsible for that action. The second time the Prime Minister pressed Bhutto and asked how it was possible for the Pakistani foreign ministry to take this action without the consent of the leader of the nation. The result of the conversation is that Bhutto talked a lot about Bangladesh and Bangabandhu in her speech at the LSE some days after. And in 1993, when there was a conference of the opposition parties, Sheikh Hasina was specially invited.

He said that the global approach was started by Bangabandhu and rudely brought to a halt by the 15<sup>th</sup> August assassination has restarted. And here he remembers the greatest Bengali of all time whose vision continues to inspire people. He said that we have to take

up the spirit of Bangabandhu to understand the alignment. Long before the structure of the SAARC was laid out, Banghabadhu has dreamt of the SAARC in philosophical terms when he said that the neighbourhood could not trigger away the energy and economy by fighting each other. And if the countries can cooperate and maintain friendship, the countries can move ahead. So he thinks that the country must look into Bangabandhu's spirit if it wants to solve the Rohingya crisis. The Rohingyas are not Bangladesh's problem. The Prime Minister has shown generosity for which everyone is thankful but now it's the world's problem.

তিনি আরও বলেন, একটা দেশের নেতা-নেত্রীদের মধ্যে যখন আলোচনা হয়, এর আগে একটা প্রস্তুতিপর্ব থাকে। বঙ্গবন্ধু পাকিস্তান থেকে বাংলাদেশে আসার কয়েক ঘণ্টার মধ্যে ইংল্যান্ডের ক্ল্যারিজেসে বিরোধী দলের মন্ত্রী ও নেতাদের সাথে কথা বলেন। এই নেতৃবৃন্দই বলেছিলেন বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীন হবার সাথে সাথে শিক্ষাবৃত্তির ব্যবস্থা বন্ধ করে দেয়া হবে। তারা জানতে চাইল বঙ্গবন্ধুর কাছে যে দেশের জন্য তারা এখন কী করতে পারেন। তিনি তাদের বাংলাদেশের শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য বৃত্তির ব্যবস্থা বন্ধ না করতে বলেন। এছাড়া তিনি বাংলাদেশের অবকাঠামো পুনর্নির্মাণে সকলকে এগিয়ে আসতে বলেন। মাত্র কয়েক মিনিটের মধ্যে তারা সকলে একযোগে দুটি ক্ষেত্রেই কাজ করতে রাজি হয়ে যায়। এমন অনেক জায়গায় দেশের নিমিত্তে বঙ্গবন্ধু গিয়েছিলেন যা কাগজপত্রে লেখালেখি হয়ত হয়নি বা হিসেব করে বের করা সম্ভব হবেনা। সাবেক পররাষ্ট্র প্রতিমন্ত্রী জোর দিয়ে বলেন, বঙ্গবন্ধুর মত এরকম একজন নেতা হয়ত আর ভবিষ্যতে পাওয়া যাবেনা, এবং এ ঘটনাসমূহ নতুন প্রজন্মের জন্য উচিত।

**Lt Colonel (Retd) Md Sahadat Hossain** said that as a military officer he had to study leadership for 27 years. For his promotion exams, he studied Khalid Bin Walid,





WWI and WWII, but even after studying all those leaders, in his mind the only leader is Bangabandhu. In 1971, he was a student in class four. At the age of 60, his biggest regret is why he was so young at that time, and why he could not be a freedom fighter. He said that in his young mind, the leader was Bangabandhu. Without pointing fingers at any institution, he said that it is a matter of great sorrow that the country that was liberated under such a leadership is suffering from corruption. He gave a proposal that the real freedom fighters and the researchers on Bangabandhu, who are alive today, should try to remove corruption from the country with the spirit of Bangabandhu. He also said that due to the degradation of the educational system, he was not sure that the country will have intellectuals like the Dr Imtiaz in the coming 20/50 years. He said that only discussing Bangabandhu's life in seminars will not help the country rather if people can indoctrinate themselves in Bangabandhu's vision and then work to remove corruption and improve the educational system, then Bangladesh will be able to prove to the world that it is because Bangladesh had Bangabandhu that the country could surpass Singapore.



**M S Siddiqui**, Legal Economist, said that what was heard after the assassination of the Bangabandhu was that Bangabandhu's economic plan was not successful and that caused the famine of 1974. He said that much has been written about his political ideology but what he understands is that there is not enough research on his economic policy. He asked the celebrity authors and researchers to write more on Bangabandhu's economic policy. He feels that it is required at the moment.



**Amina Bosor Oni**, a student of the Political Science department, at the University of Dhaka said that she was very very happy and proud to hear from the renowned scholars live whom she has always seen on TV talk shows. She then talked about her classes where they were asked by the teacher which line of Bangabandhu's 7th march speech was important to her. She said that in her opinion, the important line was when Bangabandhu said that even if only one person had the correct/just idea (against others), he would support that just opinion. She then said that if we want to implement Bangabandhu's vision in the 21st century, his speech of 7th March can be a good tool for that. Even for transparency and accountability, Bangabandhu has shown good guidelines. Bangladesh's Vision can also be achieved through implementation of ideas from Bangabandhu's 7<sup>th</sup> March speech.



## RESPONSES FROM THE SPEAKERS



### **Dr Atiur Rahman**

Bangabandhu Chair Professor, University of Dhaka

ড. আতিউর রহমান বলেন, দুর্নীতি এবং শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে বঙ্গবন্ধু গভীরভাবে আলাপ করেছেন। ২৫শে জানুয়ারি এবং ২৬ শে মার্চ, ১৯৭৫ এর বক্তব্য দুটিতে বঙ্গবন্ধু ব্যাখ্যা করেছেন কেন তিনি দ্বিতীয় বিপ্লবের দিকে যাচ্ছেন। তিনি নিজেই বলেছেন, এই দুর্নীতি কোন আইন করে দূর করা যাবে না। এর জন্য দরকার মানুষের অংশগ্রহণ। তিনি বার বার বলেছেন “people’s mobilisation” এর কথা। এমন কি ২৬ শে মার্চের ভাষণে বলেছেন, “আপনারা গ্রামে যান। গ্রামে গিয়ে সংগঠিত হন এবং সংগঠিত হয়ে দুর্নীতিবাজদের উৎখাত করেন।” তাঁর অন্তরেই ছিল দুর্নীতিমুক্ত সমাজ গড়ার বাসনা। ড. রহমান মনে করেন, এ দিকগুলি নিয়ে আরও অনেক গবেষণাকর্ম দরকার। “আমাদের স্বপ্ন সম্রাট” নামে ড. রহমান একটি সিরিজ লিখতেন। এর একটি খণ্ডাংশে তিনি বঙ্গবন্ধুর দুর্নীতি বিরোধী কর্মকাণ্ডগুলো তুলে ধরেন।

বঙ্গবন্ধু শিক্ষার উপরেও খুব গুরুত্ব দিতেন। ১৯৭০ সালের ২৮ অক্টোবর তিনি জাতির উদ্দেশ্যে ভাষণ দিয়েছিলেন। সেখানে তিনি বলেছিলেন যে, মোট দেশজ উৎপাদন এর অন্তত চার শতাংশ শিক্ষার পেছনে খরচ করতে হবে; যেখানে দুই



শতাংশের বেশি যাওয়া এখনও সম্ভব হয়নি। পরবর্তীকালে, সংবিধান এবং কুদরত-এ-খুদা শিক্ষা কমিশন এর মাধ্যমে তিনি শিক্ষার সার্বিক দিকগুলি তুলে ধরেন। তিনি কারিগরি শিক্ষার উপর জোর দেন। তবে সবচেয়ে বেশি জোর দেন মানবিক শিক্ষার উপর। তিনি এমন সব ছেলেমেয়েদের উচ্চশিক্ষায় শিক্ষিত দেখতে চাইতেন যারা কায়িক পরিশ্রম করে। এর মাধ্যমে শিক্ষার নৈতিক দিকের উপর তাঁর শ্রদ্ধা ফুটে ওঠে। তিনি নারী শিক্ষা, প্রযুক্তি শিক্ষা ও দূর-শিক্ষার ব্যাপারে গুরুত্ব দিয়েছেন। তাছাড়া, বঙ্গবন্ধুর মত এতটা গণতান্ত্রিক মনস্তত্ত্বের রাজনীতিবিদ দুর্লভ। যদিও তিনি হোসেন শহীদ সোহরাওয়ার্দী কে নিজের গুরু মনে করতেন, তাঁর সাথেও প্রায়শঃই দ্বিমত প্রকাশ করতেন। ২৫শে জানুয়ারির বক্তৃতায় বঙ্গবন্ধু বলেন যে, প্রায়ই সোহরাওয়ার্দীকে নিয়ে অনেক নেতিবাচক মন্তব্য করা হয়। তিনি এর প্রতিবাদ করতে গেলে, সোহরাওয়ার্দী তাঁকে ইতিবাচক ও শান্ত হতে বলতেন। বঙ্গবন্ধু নিজেও সেই ইতিবাচকতা নিজের মধ্যে ধারণ করেছেন। ড. রহমান উল্লেখ করেন যে বঙ্গবন্ধুর আত্মজীবনীতে ভিন্নধর্মী নেতাদের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা লক্ষণীয়। মওলানা ভাসানীর সাথে তাঁর প্রায়ই দ্বিমত হত, কিন্তু তারপরেও তাঁর প্রতি শ্রদ্ধার ঘাটতি ছিলনা। বঙ্গবন্ধু ছিলেন একজন মানবিক ও সাধারণ মানুষের নেতা। সরকারি কর্মকর্তাদের তিনি বলতেন, কারও সাথে এমন ভাবে যেন কথা না বলা হয় যার ফলে সে মনে কষ্ট পায়। ড. রহমান মনে করেন এই বিষয়গুলো বিশ্ববাসীর সামনে আরও স্পষ্টভাবে উঠে আসা উচিত।







**Ambassador (Retd) Muhammad Zamir**

Former Chief Information Commissioner of Bangladesh

সাবেক রাষ্ট্রদূত মোহাম্মদ জমির উল্লেখ করেন, ১০ জানুয়ারি ১৯৭২ এ দেশে আসার পর বঙ্গবন্ধু একটি প্রকাশনার সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করেন এবং এর নাম তিনি ঠিক করেন “বাংলাদেশ।” এর জন্যে ছয় সদস্যের একটি সম্পাদকীয় কমিটি গঠন করা হয় যার মধ্যে ছিলেন গাজী আহসান, আবদুল গাফফার চৌধুরী, নুরুল ইসলাম পাটোয়ারী, এবং রাষ্ট্রদূত জমির। বঙ্গবন্ধু রাষ্ট্রদূত জমির কে বাংলাদেশের পুনর্গঠন সম্পর্কে লেখার দায়িত্ব দেন। বঙ্গবন্ধু এই লেখাতে হার্ডিঞ্জ ব্রিজ ভেঙে যাওয়া ও পুনর্গঠনের ছবি সংযুক্ত করতে বলেন। এই বইটিতে বঙ্গবন্ধু নিজের ছবির পূর্বে সাবেক রাষ্ট্রপতি ও বিচারপতি আবু সাঈদ চৌধুরীর ছবি সংযুক্ত করতে বলেন। বইটি শেষ পর্যন্ত এভাবেই প্রকাশিত হয়। রাষ্ট্রদূত জমির বলেন, এ বিষয়গুলি প্রমাণ করে যে বঙ্গবন্ধু সदा সত্য পথ অবলম্বন করতেন। একদিন বঙ্গবন্ধু ইংরেজ কবি জন মিল্টন কে উদ্ধৃত করে বলেন, “If you call the glass half empty all the time, you are forgetting that the glass is half full.” ইতিবাচকতা ও নেতিবাচকতার প্রসঙ্গে রাষ্ট্রদূত জমির সকলকে সম্মিলিত ভাবে ইতিবাচক পথে এগিয়ে যাওয়ার জন্য বলেন। তিনি আরও বলেন বিভিন্ন দেশ ও সোশ্যাল মিডিয়ার মাধ্যমে ইতিবাচক বক্তব্য বিশ্বের দরবারে উপস্থাপন করতে হবে।



**Lt Col (Retd) Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir, Bir Protik (RM)**

Recipient of Swadinata Padak and Padma Shri

লেফট্যানেন্ট কর্ণেল কাজী সাজ্জাদ আলী জাহির আক্ষেপ প্রকাশ করেন যে বঙ্গবন্ধু ও মুক্তিযুদ্ধের আলোচনাকে পুঁজি করে আজকাল অনেকেই ব্যক্তিগত সুবিধার চিন্তা করছেন। তিনি সঠিক পন্থায় মুক্তিযুদ্ধ ও বঙ্গবন্ধুর ইতিহাস জানা ও সংরক্ষণের প্রয়োজনীয়তা তুলে ধরেন। উদাহরণস্বরূপ তিনি বঙ্গবন্ধুর ৭ ই মার্চের ভাষণ এর সামাজিক তাৎপর্য সামনে নিয়ে আসেন। বাংলাদেশের প্রথম গেরিলা যোদ্ধা ছিলেন শাহেদ আলী কসাই, তাঁর পরিবার এখন গ্রামে শিক্ষা করে। এরম অনেক ঘটনাই অজানা রয়ে গিয়েছে। লেফট্যানেন্ট কর্ণেল জাহির নতুন প্রজন্মের প্রতি আশা ব্যক্ত করেন। তিনি সকলকে সাবধান করেন যে যদি বাংলাদেশের মানুষ এখনও সচেতন না হয়, বঙ্গবন্ধু ও মুক্তিযুদ্ধ একসময় হারিয়ে যাবে। মুক্তিযোদ্ধাদের প্রসঙ্গে তিনি নিজের বিভিন্নকাজ সম্পর্কে সকলকে জ্ঞাত করেন। বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা সংগ্রামে বাংলাদেশের মাটিতে যে সকল ভারতীয় যোদ্ধা প্রাণ দিয়েছেন তিনি প্রথম তাদের তালিকা তৈরি করেন। ভারতে তিনি একটি সম্মেলনে যান এবং প্রশ্ন করেন, ভারতের গণমানুষের মধ্যে সবচেয়ে সম্মানিত নেতা কে? সবাই হাত তুলে বলেছিলেন, “বাংলাদেশের শেখ মুজিব।” তিনি বলেন স্বাধীনতার পর, একদিন কয়েকজন ভারতীয় সৈনিক বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রপতির (বঙ্গবন্ধুর) বাসা দেখতে এসেছিলেন। বঙ্গবন্ধু নিজে তাদের হাতে ধরে ভেতরে নিয়ে এসে খাবারের ব্যবস্থা করলেন। তাঁর মনে সবসময় এই চিন্তা কাজ করত যে এই লোকগুলো বাংলাদেশের জন্য যুদ্ধ করেছে। তিনি সকলকে বলেন নতুন প্রজন্মের প্রতি ভরসা রাখতে, নতুন প্রজন্মকে সামনে এগিয়ে দিতে এবং মন-মানসিকতার পরিবর্তন করতে। তিনি আশা রাখেন নিজেদের আদর্শে বাংলাদেশের ভবিষ্যৎ প্রজন্ম উজ্জ্বল হয়ে উঠবে।





**Professor Dr Syed Anwar Husain**

Bangabandhu Chair Professor, Bangladesh University of Professionals

ড. সৈয়দ আনোয়ার হোসেন সকলের সামনে বঙ্গবন্ধুর নিজের উদ্ধৃতির আলোকপাত করে তাঁর সারল্য ও বিনয়ের পরিচয় তুলে ধরেন। তিনি বলেন, বঙ্গবন্ধু নিজেই বলেছেন, “আমি ফেরেশতা নই; শয়তান-ও নই। আমি মানুষ। ভুল আমি করব, কিন্তু আমার দায়িত্ব ভুল শোধরানো।” ড. হোসেন বলেন, একরৈখিক আলোচনার মাধ্যমে গবেষণা সম্ভব নয়। তিনি “স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধ” এবং “মুক্তিযুদ্ধের” মধ্যে আভিধানিক পার্থক্য উলেখ করে জানান যে বঙ্গবন্ধু নিজে “মুক্তিযুদ্ধ” বলতেন, “স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধ” নয়। তিনি উপস্থিত শ্রোতাগণ কে সাবধান করেন এ ব্যাপারে যে বঙ্গবন্ধুকে নিয়ে আজকাল অনেক রাজনীতি হচ্ছে, অনেকের ব্যক্তিস্বার্থ সিদ্ধ হচ্ছে। কিন্তু বঙ্গবন্ধুই আড়ালে রয়ে যাচ্ছেন।

## SPEECH BY THE SESSION CHAIR



### **Professor Dr Imtiaz Ahmed**

Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka  
and Director, Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka

At the outset, **Professor Dr Imtiaz Ahmed**, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka and Director, Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka thanked all the speakers for their excellent deliberations. In his remarks, he highlighted Bangabandhu's vision and its relevance in the 21st century and sought the answer to the question: what relevance does Bangabandhu's vision have in the 21st century? As Bangabandhu's speeches are available, when someone starts to study his speeches it is not that difficult to dig and theorise the vision of Bangabandhu. According to him, the biggest vision of Bangabandhu which takes him to the global level is the culture of peace. He was absolutely uncompromising on the issue of peace. And probably that



costed his life. A few years back Dr Imtiaz conducted a content analysis of Bangabandhu's speeches delivered at various conferences. He gathered 22 speeches of Bangabandhu delivered both at the national and international levels and also in bilateral and multilateral meetings. In the 22 speeches, Bangabandhu used the word 'peace' 151 times. That is an incredible commitment to peace. If someone keeps on digging into all that he said, s/he will find that some of the things are very clear. He had an uncompromisingly anti-war attitude. He was against all kinds of war, does not matter where it occurs. And thus, he is so relevant today, particularly when we have the Ukraine war. Dr Imtiaz is shocked to witness that nobody is into diplomacy or peace. And that is the relevance of Bangabandhu. He was against the arms race. Not to mention, he was also against colonialism and racism. And this is what probably costed his life. Because by that time, there was a rigid Cold War but then he was openly in favour of Fidel Castro, Nelson Mandela, Yasir Arafat, Ho Chi Minh and also against the Vietnam War. That takes guts at that particular time when the economy of the country was down at the bottom and the infrastructure was broken. At that level telling the world that he was not going to take sides and keeping to the principle of "friendship towards all and malice towards none" takes quite a gut. On 06<sup>th</sup> February 1972, he went to Kolkata and said something there which is important to comprehend his vision. While Indira Gandhi was standing just behind him, Bangabandhu stated that "Let there be an end once for all the sterile policy of confrontations between neighbours." Through this statement, Bangabandhu was referring to the India-Pakistan conflict. And then he went on, "Let us not fitter away our natural resources but use them to lift the standard of living of our people. And then as for us, we will not be found wanting to cooperate with all concern for creating an area of peace in South Asia." And that is also a testimony that he had the vision of creating SAARC in February 1972.

Dr Imtiaz thinks that we need to create "the Bangladesh Dream" because the young generation or meritorious students do not see dreams. Now they hate the American Dreams. The idea of the American Dream was floated in 1936. The person who floated really had a vision. We are still stuck to the American Dream. And of course now there is the "Chinese Dream" of Xi Jinping. And he thinks that it is time to create the Bangladesh Dream based on Bangabandhu's vision.



Bangabandhu was very much interested in infrastructures. Because infrastructure was then really nowhere. Today, infrastructure to some extent resembles the dream of Bangabandhu. Today, Padma Bridge is an interesting marker because Padma Bridge has also created the dream—a dream mainly because we got challenged by the World Bank and then the Prime Minister decided to make it with our own resources. If someone looks into infrastructure itself, s/he will realise that it can change Bangladesh. He then gave some statistics and mentioned that only six high speed trains can change the picture of Bangladesh by connecting eight divisions of Bangladesh. With those trains, people will need only one hour to go to Sylhet and Chattogram and only 20 minutes to Barishal. According to an estimation, it will cost US\$10 billion to have a high-speed train from Dhaka to Chattogram. Interestingly, annually US \$8- \$14 billion money is being laundered. Then if it is possible to stop money laundering for one year, then we will be able to have one high-speed train. Thus, he opined that the vision has to be broadened. He then mentioned second, third and fourth points which are agriculture, health and education. He mentioned that if it is possible to construct sixty-four comprehensive hospitals in sixty-four districts, then the total scenario of health will be changed. Similarly, he mentioned that if we can construct sixty-four centre of excellence in sixty four districts then the total scenario of education will also be changed. From his experience of teaching in Dhaka University he mentioned that most of the children of the elite class of the society do not study in the



University of Dhaka which is a big problem. Without changing the structure or the belief system that “studying in a public University is a good option”, none will be able to bring qualitative change. Otherwise, the country may face the similar situation of Sri Lanka because within 30 years of the war in Sri Lanka, children of the elite class of the country abandoned country.

While concluding, Professor Imtiaz thanked all of the audience including the panelists. He flagged a couple of things. One of those is corruption and he noted that hardly any country will be found where corruption does not exist. According to him, in terms of volume, corruption in the US is the highest. He gave an example that on the vaccine issue, there was alleged corruption of US\$100 billion. Dr Imtiaz thinks that it is important to see where the laundered money is being re-invested. Interestingly, the money from corruption in the US is reinvested in the US. However, the corrupted money of Bangladesh is also reinvested in the Western countries like the US. He thinks that is the problem and if we can resolve the problem, that will be a good thing. According to him, it is quite impossible to make a totally corruption-free society. He mentioned that Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) makes a ranking of the corrupted countries. However, they do not make rankings of the destination of the corrupted money. If it does such rankings, then it will be visible that all money is going to the developed countries, i.e., the UK, Switzerland, US, Canada. Today, one of the most uttered names is “Begum para” which is all about that corrupted money but they keep it quiet. He added that the way universities are ranked is also problematic. Dhaka University lags behind in terms of ranking, however, if budgetary issues are taken into account, then we will see Dhaka University’s annual budget is US\$102 million whereas the budget of Harvard University is US\$5.6 billion. He noted that if Dhaka University gets the budget of US\$1 billion then eminent scholars like Amartya Sen will also come to teach in Dhaka University along with Harvard University. Hence, he noted that how China has brought change in this arena is also remarkable. He himself was a member of a committee of Tianjin University where they made a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) chair and signals that money is not an issue in education. In this sector, if we can bring change then the future will be bright. He mentioned that, these days, along with brain drain, there is also asset drain which he thinks should be stopped.



He also flagged the issue of democracy. He noted that we have not been imaginative with the word democracy. Democracy has been hijacked by many countries including the US. He noted that he always points out to the issue that being a democratic country since the second world war the US has waged unlawful wars. If the Korean War is put aside, then the bulk of wars waged by the US are unlawful wars that killed millions of people. He then raised a question: if a country can wage an unlawful war, then how can it be termed as a democratic country? So, democracy has been hijacked and confined to the electoral system and we are no longer imaginative about democracy. Hence, we need to be more imaginative and we should keep in our mind Mahatma Gandhi's words that democracy is a heartless doctrine. What it means is that 51 per cent can impose their will on 49 percent. Dr Imtiaz is against it. Even nowadays, 51 per cent vote is also not required. When Narendra Modi for the first time came into power, he received only 34 per cent of the popular vote, however, gained two-thirds of the majority seats, And the second time he received 36 per cent of the popular vote and two-thirds of the majority. In the US elections also, it is seen that the majority of them received a lesser number of popular votes. Democracy is a beautiful word; however, we need to reinvent democracy. Like other concepts, socialism or nationalism the concept of democracy has also been



hijacked. Hence, we should ponder upon the issue of how the voices of the grassroots are also reflected in the decision-making processes. His last point was the issue of a culture of fear. He mentioned that nowadays, there is geopolitics of fear. He then took an endeavour in explaining why the geopolitics of fear and the Taiwan issue evolved. According to him and many others, by creating tensions in Taiwan, the US wants the scientists of advanced chips to migrate to the US. Because they know that today and tomorrow when Taiwan will annex China, then the number of advanced microchips that will come to the control of China is unimaginable. Taiwan is already a key player in producing microchips and mainland China is also developing that and the combined force will be huge. A US university has already made a simulation to assess how many Taiwanese scientist and researchers would like to go to the US if the US becomes able to successfully show the 'China fear' to the Taiwanese. Unfortunately, the report could not impress them because they found that not many of them will be interested to migrate to the US. Because of the issues like xenophobia or the Black Lives Matter movement, the American Dream has faded. Thus, Dr Imtiaz opined that we have to alter the culture of fear and geopolitics of fear. If the culture of fear is not changed then it will be difficult to stop the brain drain. He in this regard mentioned Lenin's famous quote 'the concrete analysis of the concrete situation'. Hence, if we unimaginatively think of democracy then it will be difficult to fulfil the dreams of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

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