

# **The Internationalisation Of Bangladeshi Military Intervention In 2007**

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International relations have major role in governing different countries, particularly, in this era of globalisation. It is more evident in developing countries' politics.

Moreover, extra-constitutional government needs special support and attention from foreign powers for its legitimacy. Bangladesh witnessed military-backed government's parley to gain international support during its tenure of 2007-08 period. The military rule contacted relevant international powerful quarters in order to receive their supports.

Appointment of Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed as the head of the government was nothing but first signal of military administration to show that they have international connections. On the one hand the military's priority was Dr. Muhammad Yunus, and on the other hand, Yunus's choice was different. He was more interested to be the head of the state or the President of the country. Instead of joining as head of the government or Chief Adviser during the army-backed regime Yunus made his all out efforts to start with a journey for his new political front 'Nagarik Shakti'. However, that move has failed as people went against the military's anti-political behaviour.

## **Role of PR in UN**

Initially, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh in United Nations Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury was aspirant for the position of the Chief Adviser. After completion of his regular appointment in the United Nations as Permanent Representative, Iftekhar was discharging his contractual assignment in the same position in New York. In fact, he was the unofficial adviser of Army Chief Moeen Uddin Ahmed prior to 11 January 2007 military coup.

Moeen was desperate to get international support for his takeover. Moeen and Iftekhar had series of meetings on the eve of '1/11' in New York where he managed a programme showing that he needed to visit UN Headquarters as Bangladesh is one of the major contributors in UN Peace Keeping Force where Bangladesh Army has been in leading position there. Iftekhar was highly ambitious in order for his elevation. Contrarily, Moeen was serious for Iftekhar as he thought sitting UN envoy may manoeuvre international body in favour of a military takeover. Thus, any possible sanctions against his military takeover can be avoided, as he thought. Iftekhar was saying 'Bangladesh needs a benevolent dictator' in 2005 while he was attending Halifax Conference in Canada. According to a Canadian journalist William Sloan, a coterie was working against democracy since then. A politician cum jurist Dr. Kamal Hossain also echoed in same voice and commented that they were trying to change the regime since 2005 against both BNP and Awami League.

Dr. Iftekhar A. Chowdhury wanted to be the United Nations Secretary General at the end of BNP regime, which was not possible to be implemented by the government as recently Bangladesh saw a major defeat in OIC Secretary General election. BNP government did not want to get another setback in diplomacy. Later, Iftekhar was appointed Adviser for Foreign Affairs. Incidentally he was brother in law of Dr. Fakhruddin.

### **Role of India**

Although UN and USA i.e. international community was in favour of democracy, India was supporting Moeen. There was a reason behind it. Acting High Commissioner of India S. Chakrabarti heard unexpected comments from Sheikh Hasina and reported to his government accordingly. Besides, Dr. Kamal Hossain and Dr. Muhammad Yunus went in favour of army rule. Later Dr. Gowher Rizvi was able to minimise the gap that was created as Pranab Mukherji was helping Hasina though Dr. Monmohon Sing and a powerful group of Indian government went against AL for obvious reason. However, as international community did not support that India also

came on back foot. I was told that India agreed that they would not go against the rest of the world against popular support. Finally India told Moeen to make America agreeing to what he wants to do. Then Moeen decided to send his representative to USA with concrete proposal.

Dr. Yunus and Dr. Kamal went to New Delhi in favour of '1/11' era, which annoyed Sheikh Hasina, according to competent sources. There was a reason, why Indian authority went in favour of army rulers. India found the reason when Indian acting High Commissioner in Bangladesh S. Chakrabarti witnessed an incident related to a remark of a top Awami League leader. The remark was made against two leaders Suranjit Sengupta and Mukul Bose, incidentally who represent minority community as well, at the end of December 2006 in a reception in Dhaka. That 'objectionable' word affected a common community related to both Bangladesh and India. The reason why the remark was made is both reformist leaders went against their leader. Subsequently, at the same time, nine senior leaders of Awami League sent their complaints to Indian influential leader cum the then External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee and to US embassy in Dhaka. However, the comment annoyed Indian authority which includes then Premier Dr. Monmohon Sing. Indian intelligence agency - Research and Analysis Wing-RAW has also taken it seriously. Accordingly, Indian government received a diplomatic note from acting Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh.

Pranab Mukherji informed Sheikh Hasina that a blunder was made by the comment. AL President sent Dr. Gowher Rizvi as her special envoy to solve the created problem. When Moeen failed his mission eventually AL corrected the mistake done by its leader's comment. Moeen established authoritarianism which was a shift from what Bangladesh achieved since victory of democracy in 1991. India supported authoritarianism in Bangladesh since then.

Lt. General Moeen was given a red carpet reception by Indian government while he visited that country. General Officer Commanding-GOC of Rangpur area of

Bangladesh Army Major General Syed Fatemi Ahmed Rumi, who was DG of Special Security Force-SSF was the only general who accompanied army chief during the visit.

According to Indian authority, he was given protocol of head of the government. Indian government gave him six horses as gift. India knows how to do business with even military dictators. An example can be cited here in this regard that in October 1999 General Parvez Musharraf came to power in retaliation to his being sacked by then Premier of Pakistan while he was on a flight coming back from Sri Lanka. In the changed world scenario, following the coup, Musharraf declared himself the 'Chief Executive' of Pakistan. However, then Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Bajpayee congratulated him within very short time of his takeover. Bajpayee made a phone call to Musharraf and addressed 'Mr. President'. That was a signal given to Musharraf to proceed towards Presidency. Indeed, the general was in a dilemma on this. Eventually, an army person with uniform Parvez Musharraf declared himself the President of Pakistan.

Meanwhile, prior to '1/11' there was no High Commissioner of India posted to Bangladesh as Veena Sikri resigned from the position. Reason of her resignation was, she and 11 other senior Indian diplomats including her husband were superseded. A new High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty joined in January 2007. Deputy High Commissioner S. Chakravarti was discharging as acting HC during the period. Evidently, India played very proactive role in favour of a one sided election in Bangladesh in 2014. Indian High Commissioner Pankaj Saran did a shuttle diplomacy to USA and other western diplomats in Dhaka as well as UN envoys to allow holding election whatever it is. The country's argument was if this election is held there would be a martial law. This time the neighbouring country's fear is the possible military coup would be anti Indian like unlike the pro-Indian coup of 2007. Then it was said that, for the sake of continuity of constitutional rule the election would be held and within short time there will be another election accommodating

boycotting political parties. Awami League leaders Tofail Ahmed (supported by another team member Ameer Hossain Amu in the negotiation with visiting UN envoy Oscar Farnandez Taranco, which was finally endorsed by the AL President Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina) and Indian side referred March 1988 and February 1996 elections in this regard and sought to allow AL to do same kind of election. On the eve of controversial 5 January election in Bangladesh, visiting Indian Foreign Secretary Sujata Sing's comment against BNP-Jamaat alliances, which was disclosed by the President of Jatiya Party Hussain Mohammad Ershad, has revealed Indian interest. That comment was undiplomatic as well. In the election in 153 seats of parliament candidates were elected uncontested means without election. Directorate General of Forces Intelligent - DGFI was given authority to hold election. Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad withdrawn his nomination within scheduled time, but he was declared elected. Likewise, many candidates either elected or their nominations were declared void. Ershad was arrested by the intelligence agency prior to election. Election was held at the direction was the government. Ershad demanded extension of filing of nominations, while Premier replied if I do so, BNP will join the process. Actually, election commission decided to declare 12 January the Election Day. Thinking if it needed to reschedule to accommodate opposition parties there should be at least a week in hand. DGFI people claimed, when government uses them they have to carry out their assignments without any choice. Regardless whether it is army government of Moeen or Hasina government of Awami League, DGFI does their assigned duty as per desire of the government of the day with high quality.

After the election was over, as the government was changed in India under the leadership of Narendra Modi, Indian High Commissioner shifted his position by saying that now his government's policy will be election is absolutely Bangladesh's internal affair and India would not intervene on it. That means that government can continue as it wishes for full term or so. Again that stance of the neighbouring country helps present government. Rather, Deputy High Commissioner of India

Sandeep Chakravorty informed that without their help, Bangladesh could not win in recent two elections of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association-CPA and Inter Parliamentary Union-IPU. Additionally, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia expressed her intention to visit India to join the oath taking ceremony of newly elected Prime Minister Norendra Modi responding latter's invitation this year. However, the visit was not held, as Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh sent a diplomatic note to his government that if it happens, that will give a wrong signal to politics of Bangladesh. Already opposition is in the better position. Finally, the 'Chanakya diplomacy' won.

Most recently former Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Veena Seekri made it clear that India's foreign policy and foreign relations are not changed with the changes of party in power. Another Ex-Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty underscored the need for an accepted general election to be held in Bangladesh for democracy's sake. Veena's statement has been criticised by a cross section of people as she was comparing two top political leaders of Bangladesh and raised allegations against the host country in an 'undiplomatic manner', while Pinak's speech was appreciated instead. They visited Bangladesh in connection with a conference of former High Commissioners of both Bangladesh and India, which was held in Dhaka on 14 November 2014. Furthermore, due to maintaining extra-relations, a Pakistani High Commissioner was withdrawn from Dhaka at the end of her period in Bangladesh.

It is obvious that India will do its own diplomacy. Similarly Bangladesh should pursue its own diplomacy, where the country can be benefitted. There should be a 'win win situation' in diplomacy. Since independence India has been taking its interest in Bangladesh, although previously it was not open. According to the diplomats, India is annoyed with BNP as its Chairperson dishonoured their President, who is the symbol of nation. Last year while President Pranab Mukherjee was visiting Bangladesh, there was a scheduled meeting with the then Leader of the

Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia, which was cancelled by her. According to the Indian diplomats, former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her entourage visited India before Indian President's visit to Bangladesh when they were given high level reception, protocol and honour. But reciprocal relation was disturbed by the dishonour to Indian president. They opined, in the past India worked with military regimes of Bangladesh also. On the other hand, BNP says, on another occasion, Paranab Mukherjee did not meet once when he visited Bangladesh as a minister and some other ministers also followed this path. Then it was not taken seriously. On this issue, Indian point is the president is the symbol of nation and this position cannot be compared with ministerial portfolio.

Prior to early 2014 election in Bangladesh, India thought BNP and its alliances were going to form the government and due to this reason, they were doing business with BNP as well. Although AL is India's natural ally, regardless which party either BJP or Congress in power, India was doing everything covertly. However, they did something overtly following the 'undiplomatic attitude' from BNP, which was also not desirable, they agreed.

At the backdrop of India's extra-role in Bangladesh, US Ambassador Dan W. Mozena paid a visit to India prior to last most controversial parliamentary election held on 14 January 2014. American diplomat tried to understand India's mindset about Bangladesh.

### **Role of two Amins'**

Brigadier General A T M Amin (known as Bihari Amin) worked for internationalisation of military rule of 2007-08. Initially he briefed US Ambassador, where his vindictiveness was exposed. He told Butenis that I was relieved and DG NSI Major General Rezzakul Haider Chowdhury was sacked. These were military's out of jurisdiction. He introduced me in my previous position intentionally. Brigadier Amin and a group of army officers went to Pakistan and Turkey to get ideas and collect documents to follow their model of governance including that of 'minus two

formulae'. In Pakistan, General Parvez Musharraf ousted the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 1999 from politics for ten years, which is popularly known as minus two formulae. Military backed government wanted to replicate this notion in Bangladesh during 2007-08 military rule.

Subsequently, Ameen compromised with politicians on behalf of Moeen.

Military Secretary to the President Major General Aminul Karim played the most important role to allow Moeen to take over. When we were in a meeting of law and order on '1/11' presided over by the President Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed at the Cabinet Room of Bangabhaban, Aminul dared to interrupt the meeting at one stage, saying that three chiefs are coming to meet the President and he also asked to make an end of the meeting. There was no schedule of any meeting of Chiefs of Army, Navy and Air Forces with the president that day. Moreover, it was just 'uncalled for'.

According to a report of senior journalist Saleem Samad in 2008, Major General Aminul Karim was planted as MSP to Bangabhaban. Aminul attempted to assassinate me on 26 February 2007 in Dhaka through DGFI and on 7 September 2007 at a Janaza prayer of late Khatib of Baitul Muqarram National Masjid Maulana Ubaidul Haq at National Eidgah through uniformed army people. He made pressure on high officials of government to oust me from ministerial residence of Mintoo Road, where I was residing as Adviser to the President of Bangladesh and a minister. That very Aminul Karim was holding series of meetings with Moeen prior to military takeover on 11 January 2007. He, by convincing and with support from Moeen, managed to oust me from my government ministerial position illegitimately. Aminul Karim was rewarded by Moeen for his unprecedented supportive role, without which he could not takeover. Brigadier A T M Amin attempted to assassinate me. He gave me life threat on 15 September 2008 over the phone and lobbied to bring me back from London and after a couple of days a group of army officers attempted to kill me in London. A T M Amin was also rewarded as he continued unflinching support to army chief.



During this time Moeen told one of our common persons in Dhaka that he will turn me into 'Haddi may Kebab', if I can be caught.

Agitating political parties on the street created unwanted situation in 2006, which really turned into a political deadlock-

### Bangladeshi former main opposition sets deadline to press for fresh election schedule



Rejecting the general elections on January 21 next year, Bangladeshi former main opposition Awami League-led 14-party combine demanded fresh schedule by December 2, otherwise, they will hold non-stop blockade from December 3.

At a crowded press conference here Monday, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina demanded recasting of the election commission by removing the controversial election commissioners, publication of flawless electoral roll and President Iajuddin Ahmed's resignation from the Chief Advisor's post of interim caretaker government.

She demanded appointment of a new Chief Advisor by the deadline for holding free and fair parliamentary elections.

Hasina also announced siege at the Election Commission Secretariat Tuesday, countrywide protest rally on Wednesday and sit-in strike in front of the Bangabhaban (President House) on Thursday.

"The election schedule was suddenly announced. The election commission is working at the dictation of a leader of a particular party (Ex-prime minister and former ruling BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, " Hasina told reporters.

The Awami League president alleged that present caretaker government and the election commission do not want free and fair elections. Rather, they want to help rigging the elections in favour Khaleda Zia's alliance.

Former ruling 4-party alliance of ex-Prime Minister Khaleda Zia however welcomed the election schedule and accused her political opponents of disrupting the elections on various pretexts.

The Election Commission announced the schedule Monday fixing January 21 as polling day.

Rejection of the election schedule by Sheikh Hasina who ruled Bangladesh as Prime Minister from 1996-2001 would further deepen the political crisis in the country.

Source: Xinhua

It may be pertinent to mention here, I worked in the UN system since long first as a diplomatic journalist cum editor and later in the capacity of a government actor. I had to seek assistance from the world body, while had been in the statecraft. It was required in order to continue with the democratic process and to stop ensuing probable military takeover. Before joining the government, I had to cover a number of UN events as a career journalist. I also attended the United Nations General Assembly-UNGA several years, including particularly the 1995 UNGA, which celebrated its golden jubilee. I did have contact with Kofi Annan while he was discharging the responsibility as the Under Secretary General. Kofi Annan could not have visited Bangladesh then as he was leaving the World body on completion of his two terms as the Secretary General. However, in response to my approach, he put emphasis to the situation of Bangladesh and sent his emissaries to Bangladesh in November 2006 -

### Kofi Annan sends top aide to Bangladesh to help ensure peaceful polls



UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, concerned about current political developments in Bangladesh, is sending a top aide to the country Wednesday to help ensure peaceful and transparent general elections, private news agency UNB reported Tuesday.

Craig Jenness, director of the UN Electoral Assistance Division, will be in Bangladesh from Wednesday through Friday to meet with the Chief Advisor of the caretaker government Iajuddin Ahmed and other senior officials, election authorities, political party leaders and various interest groups, a UN official here was quoted as saying.

The official said Annan had been following the developments in Bangladesh with concern and wanted to offer UN support to the process "so that these important elections can enjoy the full confidence of the people of Bangladesh."

According to Constitution, a neutral caretaker government will organize the general election in Bangladesh within 90 days after taking office.

The former ruling BNP-led 4-party government led by former prime minister Khaleda Zia ended its tenure on October 27, and handed over the power to the caretaker government led by President Iajuddin Ahmed on October 29.

The former main opposition Awami League-led 14-party combine led by former prime minister Sheikh Hasina had staged three rounds of countrywide blockade since October 28, demanding for reconstitution of the Election Commission.

*Source: Xinhua*

What diplomacy I started with Kofi Annan in November 2006, aiming to hold a participatory parliamentary election on 22 January 2007, later new Secretary General Ban-ki moon continued the mission since 1 January 2007. I and the visiting UN envoy Craig Jenness met one to one. For obvious reasons, the then UN Resident Coordinator Renata Lok Dessallien had to be outside during the meeting. There, I informed the envoy my observation that a military takeover is imminent led by Army Chief Lt. Gen. Moeen. I sought UN's support in order to halt planned military takeover for the sake of continuity of democratic process and for unhindered constitutional rule.

Moeen managed immediate past PM in favour of him to declare the State of Emergency on 28 October 2006 showing the 'Logi-Boitha' (Paddle-Stick) event. The dead bodies of that event were their capital what was result of army chief Moeen's instigation. He used DGFI to make it happen. Following the incident, there was dancing on the dead bodies. Whole incident was recorded by the intelligence agency. There was a plan to use this record to take over power. On the 29 December 2006, process of declaration of the State of Emergency was done at Prime Minister's Office – PMO. On that night power came to us as the President took oath of office of the Chief Adviser. The proposal of declaration of the State of Emergency was turned down by me. Later Moeen attempted two more times to take over power in disguise the same way. I foiled all these. This article will narrate more on this in the later part. Consequently, an offer came to me from the army group loyal to its chief to be the President of the country. One of the reasons of that the President trusted me much and he was dependent on me. Moeen wrote in his book that I was most powerful in the Presidency. They propagated that I already became the de-facto President and Prime Minister. They really astonished, when I refused the proposal saying my

agenda is to follow the constitution, to hold parliamentary election and to run the government which would be only routine affair. Virtually, the group showed seriousness, appreciated my role and asked for my new CV. Later they again failed to manage me when offered me the position of Chief Adviser. Eventually, the position was given to Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed, who had also World Bank connection. Incidentally, previously Dr. Fakhruddin lobbied for the position of one of the Advisers' to us. Then it was not possible from our part to translate into action, as we had to consult with both arch rival political parties on such issues. The AL did not agree with the proposal as he was politically appointed Governor of the central Bank - Bangladesh Bank by immediate past BNP Government. Ironically, later same AL backed him when he became the Chief Adviser in military-backed government. When the military group failed to pursue me, they decided to oust me from the statecraft and use the President to serve their purpose. Actually that was their strategy to take power out from us gradually. Thus they ruled the country in 2007-08.

The aforementioned power monger coterie was against the judiciary as they were suffering from inferiority complex. At the part of that plan, Election Commission and some other institutions eventually out of the hands of judiciary. Military rulers first make civilians the presidents. Latest examples of that were Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem and Justice Abul Fazal Mohammad Ahsanuddin Chowdhury in Bangladesh and Justice Mohammad Rafiq Tarar in Pakistan. However, military-backed government of 2007 broke the precedence at the part of their plan. This way former Bangladesh Bank Governor became the head of the government.

The former Premier asked several times, why I obstructed State of Emergency again and again. Finally when it was declared on the 11 January 2007, she did not receive my call. In fact, she believed army officers much. In return, they betrayed her. Lt. Gen. Moeen, DG DGFI Maj. Gen. Mohammad Sadik Hasan Rumi, MSP Maj. Gen. Aminul Karim and DG SSF Syed Fatemi Ahmed Rumi were deadly against DG NSI Maj. Gen. Rezzakul Haider Chowdhury. On some occasions, they stopped DG NSI to

enter President's room. I had to allow the DG to discharge his duty. Both the DGs of NSI and DGFI needed to submit their reports to the head of the government.

Although I failed to make the politicians understand, I was successful to make our development partners in this regard for the sake of Bangladesh's democracy. As I was worried for democracy, the UN and the USA has taken it seriously. Our common issues were democracy and constitutional rule. A number of army officers were against takeover. But they were unable to do anything against army chief. An army general raised a question in a meeting of the formation commanders about more media coverage of army people during the military-backed regime. He told that wrong signal was going to the people about army by this. In a week he was transferred to a less important posting of army. This way, Moeen gave signal to army officers. When General Masud went against Moeen's lust to capture power as the president, within very short time he was overthrown from army. When Moeen extended his service by one year, relevant file was processed without the knowledge of the second in command in army General Masud although then he was the PSO. According to the rule, the PSO was supposed to process such kind of file and to send to the President. Unfortunately and unusually, Brigadier Amin went with the file to Bangabhaban, where the President had no other choice other than signing it. In addition, two lady leaders were arrested at Moeen's desire. Other general's opinions on this were turned down. These are some evidences of Moeen's exercise of power during those days.

Moeen told Khaleda Zia that there should be election without AL. On the contrary, he informed Sheikh Hasina that she will be brought to power through election and if necessary without election. He instigated 'Logi-Boitha' and other blockade programmes. He also bluffed a number of people including General Ershad, B. Chowdhury, Dr. Kamal Hossain, Dr. Muhammad Yunus and Dr. Ferdous Koreshi. He floated a political party namely 'Jago Bangladesh'. Moeen wanted to hypnotise me as he did so to the former PM earlier. However, I could read him. For this reason, prior

to appoint him army chief, I sent a 5 pages report to an important authority on this issue, where Moeen's plan and intention were mentioned. The report also briefed about other generals from whom army chief could have been appointed.

Unfortunately, the advice was not taken into consideration. I called Moeen and his associates betrayers when they were in power.

It can be argued that If I did not halt the State of Emergency on 29 October 2006 night which was drafted and signed by the PM after working whole day at the PMO, it would have been declared. In November 2006 Moeen attempted to declare the State of Emergency on another occasion, which was again turned down by me. In third instance, after successful instigation by managing four advisers resignation from the government, army chief failed regarding this as we filled in vacancy and tackle the situation. When we deployed army countrywide in aid to civil power following CRPC's provision, Moeen included trial of terrorism and corruption in the terms and conditions of that deployment in line with his plan to grab power. Consequently, I managed to correct the order by the President in the greater interest of the country in order to hold planned parliamentary election. Finally, when the Martial Law was made inevitable by 12 January, with help from USA, I did my last job, and thus we halted the martial law. As both the rival parties supported Moeen's State of Emergency, one knowing and one without understanding, at last it took place. After taking over power, what was done by General Moeen that was visible in home and abroad. Yet, Moeen tells a lie. He was proud to be a green card holder of USA. It was proved once again that he was a coward army officer, when it was disclosed that he wanted to suicide after BDR mutiny occurred on 25/16 February 2009 (ManabZamin 2014).

### ~~**Moeen U Ahmed wanted to be president: Moudud**~~

According to a report of the Daily Star on 12 May 2013, BNP leader Moudud Ahmed said former Army Chief Moeen U Ahmed wanted to become president of the country. The report said, Moudud was addressing a book launching ceremony in the Supreme Court Bar Auditorium in the capital on the previous day.

“When I was taken to remand under army custody with my eyes blindfolded, I asked two young army officers what they wanted. They replied, they were working so that the army chief [Moeen U Ahmed] could be the country’s president,” Moudud said recalling his remand days during the past military backed caretaker government. He was addressing a book launching ceremony in the Supreme Court Bar Auditorium in the capital. The University Press Limited has published the book titled “Amar Karagarer Dinguli: 2007-08” [my days in jail] by Moudud. In the book, he has also expressed his views about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia who were also in sub-jails during the caretaker government. With former Dhaka University vice-chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed in the chair, Prof Mahbubullah, and Prof Talukder Moniruzzaman also spoke.

The UN Resident Coordinator in Dhaka Renata Lok Dessallien’s role was most controversial. Either she issued a statement supporting Moeen’s takeover or Moeen blackmailed her making a fake copy in her name which he used in front of the President Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed on the ‘1/11’. This statement helped army chief to convince army rank and file those who did not support Moeen’s mission.

Below are some reports on UN special envoy's visit to Bangladesh:

# দৈনিক ইত্তেফাক

THE DAILY ITTEFAQ

প্রতিষ্ঠাতা : তফাজ্জল হোসেন মানিক মিয়া

নভেম্বর ৩০, ২০০৬, বৃহস্পতিবার : অধ্যায় ১৬, ১৪১৩

স্বল্প ও শান্তিপূর্ণ নির্বাচন অনুষ্ঠানে সবরকম পদক্ষেপ নেয়া হয়েছে  
জাতিসংঘ বিশেষ দূতকে রাষ্ট্রপতি

।। ইউএনবি ।।

রাষ্ট্রপতি ও প্রধান উপদেষ্টা প্রফেসর ইয়াজউদ্দিন আহম্মেদ বলেছেন, অবাধ, সুষ্ঠু, নিরপেক্ষ ও শান্তিপূর্ণ সংসদ নির্বাচন অনুষ্ঠানের সবরকম পদক্ষেপ নেয়া হয়েছে। তিনি জাতিসংঘের নির্বাচন পর্যবেক্ষকদের বাংলাদেশে পাঠানোর আহ্বান জানিয়েছেন। বাংলাদেশ সফররত জাতিসংঘ মহাসচিবের বিশেষ দূত ফ্রেইগ জেনেম গতকাল বুধবার বিকালে বঙ্গভবনে রাষ্ট্রপতির সাথে সাক্ষাৎ করলে তাকে একথা বলেন প্রেসিডেন্ট।

বাংলাদেশের তত্ত্বাবধায়ক সরকার ও রাজনৈতিক নেতাদের জন্য জাতিসংঘ মহাসচিব কফি আনানের বার্তা নিয়ে গতকাল সকালেই ঢাকায় এসে পৌঁছেছেন বিশেষ দূত। বার্তায় কফি আনান উল্লেখ করেছেন, বাংলাদেশে জাতীয় সংসদ নির্বাচনী ইস্যু নিয়ে সৃষ্ট রাজনৈতিক পরিস্থিতিতে জাতিসংঘ উদ্বিগ্ন। বিশেষ দূত নির্বাচনী ইস্যুতে দ্বিধাবিভক্ত রাজনৈতিক দলের নেতাদের সাথে কথা বলার আগে রাষ্ট্রপতি ও তত্ত্বাবধায়ক সরকারের প্রধান উপদেষ্টার সাথে কথা বলেন।

সুষ্ঠু নির্বাচন অনুষ্ঠানকে নির্বিঘ্ন করে তুলতে কি কি ব্যবস্থা নেয়া হয়েছে তার উল্লেখ করতে গিয়ে প্রফেসর ইয়াজউদ্দিন আহম্মেদ বিশেষ দূতকে জানান, কোন কোন রাজনৈতিক দলের দাবি অনুযায়ী সুষ্ঠু নির্বাচনী পরিবেশ তৈরির জন্য প্রধান নির্বাচন কমিশনার ছুটিতে গেলেন এবং দুইজন নতুন নির্বাচন কমিশনার নিয়োগ করা হয়েছে। বিস্তারিত



UN special envoy asks Bangladeshi political parties to resolve differences over elections

Q + -

UN special envoy Craig Jenness termed the present situation in Bangladesh worrying and asked political parties to resolve their differences over the election through dialogue in a spirit of compromise.



"I am convinced that the principal political parties of Bangladesh, who have themselves sacrificed for democracy in the past, will be able to make the necessary compromise again," he told a press conference here Friday capping his 3-day visit to Bangladesh.

"This concern and crisis need to be overcome in a spirit of compromise," he said, wondering "Whether there is enough political will to reach compromise through dialogue."

The envoy said, "If the current crisis continues, Bangladesh's international reputation could be affected."

Asked whether the results would be acceptable to the international community if all parties could not participate in the elections, Jenness said he believes all political parties would participate in the elections.

However he noted it is important that the people should be given fair chance to vote for parties of their choice.

The envoy said more works need to be done for holding free and credible elections and the caretaker government, the election commission and the political parties have great responsibility to create the environment for such credible polls.

Asked if he has any formula to overcome the crisis, he said "I am not here as a mediator but I am convinced that there are lot of rooms for cooperation in resolving the issues through dialogue."

Asked if he thinks political parties are willing to sit for dialogue, the envoy said he has encouraged the political parties he met during his stay to resolve their differences through dialogue.

Jenness who was involved in many elections as Head of the UN Electoral Assistance Division said a level playing field, a peaceful environment, a trusted election commission, assurances of casting votes freely by electorate and impartial voting and counting are critical to ensure public confidence in any election.

He said UN is prepared to provide additional support to the electoral process in the country as Bangladesh is important to UN and plays a very important role in the UN peacekeeping operation.

Jenness said UN itself will not send election observers but coordinate international election observers from EU, Commonwealth, America would be sent to monitor the election.

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) country representative Reneta Lok Dessallien said approximately 320 foreign observers would be coming to Bangladesh to observe the elections.

The former ruling BNP-led 4-party government ended its tenure on Oct. 27 and handed over the power to a caretaker government headed by President Iajuddin Ahmed.

The former main opposition Awami League-led 14-party combine had launched three rounds of blockades since Oct. 28 demanding for reconstitution of Election Commission.

The 14-party combine will launch another round of blockade from Sunday if their demands are not met.

*Source: Xinhua*

UN concerned about free, fair polls in Bangladesh  
*Annan's special envoy meets Iajuddin, Hasina*  
Unb, Dhaka

UN secretary general's special envoy Craig Jenness has said the United Nations is concerned about free, fair and transparent general elections in Bangladesh and urged political leadership to resolve differences in the electoral process through dialogue.

"We're concerned about free, fair and transparent elections in Bangladesh and UN is ready to support the holding of free and fair elections," he told reporters after a meeting with Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin at the foreign ministry yesterday.

Craig Jenness arrived here yesterday morning. Explaining the purpose of his visit to Dhaka, Jenness said Secretary General Kofi Annan has sent him to offer UN support to free and fair elections here and also express concern about some violent incidents that no one desires.

The visiting envoy said he would like to encourage the leaders of political parties to resolve their differences in the political process through dialogue.

In the afternoon, the UN envoy called on President/ Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban.

The president told the envoy that all steps have been taken to hold free, fair, neutral and peaceful parliamentary elections and urged the United Nations to send observers to Bangladesh.

Listing the measures taken to remove hurdles to the polls, the president told the envoy that the chief election commissioner had gone on leave and two new election commissioners had been appointed to satisfy political parties' demands to create a congenial atmosphere for free and fair polls. He also told the envoy that the EC had announced the election schedule.

In addition, contract jobs at different levels have been cancelled and necessary reshuffles in the administration done for impartial elections, he said.

"The party who will secure electoral mandate will form the next government," the president told the envoy.

He thanked the UN secretary general for extending cooperation in advancing democratic process in Bangladesh.

In response, the special envoy said the UN does not like to see any political violence in Bangladesh and noted that all problems can be resolved through the holding of peaceful elections.

The envoy requested the chief adviser to take steps to establish peace in the country.

Jenness informed the president that he would convey the UN secretary general's concern about "political violence" during his meetings with the leaders of the major political parties.

Later, Jenness met Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and offered UN assistance to advance the democratic process in Bangladesh.

"I've come here as special envoy to support a free, fair and democratic election as the people of this country want a peaceful election," he told reporters after an hour-long meeting with the AL chief at Sudha Sadan.

Jenness hoped the issues, whatever they are, should be resolved through dialogue.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, who was present at the meeting, told the reporters that UN wants free, fair and neutral elections and has offered its assistance if required.

Asked about the UN suggestion for political dialogue, he said the dialogue between parties is not required now as the matter is related to the caretaker government.

Jalil said the UN envoy expressed concern at the appointment of partisan election commissioners.

Awami League International Affairs Secretary Syed Abdul Hossain and former ambassador Ziauddin were also present.

## Bangladesh to hold fair elections: president



Bangaldeshi President and Chief Advisor Professor Iajuddin Ahmed told a visiting UN special envoy in Dhaka on Wednesday that all steps are taken to hold free, fair, neutral and peaceful parliamentary elections, private news agency UNB reported.

Iajuddin urged the UN to send election observers to Bangladesh.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's special envoy, Craig Genness, arrived here Wednesday morning carrying his message for the caretaker government and the political leaders of Bangladesh that the world organization is concerned over the political situation stemming from electoral issues here.

He called on Ahmed in the afternoon in the first instance before talks with the political parties on both sides of the political division concerning the contentious electoral issues.

Listing to the measures taken to remove hurdles to the polls, Professor Ahmed told the envoy that the Chief Election Commissioner MA Aziz went on leave, two new Election Commissioners were appointed in view of some political parties' demand for creating congenial atmosphere for the elections while the EC announced the election schedule.

Besides, he said, contract jobs at different levels have been canceled and necessary reshuffles in the administration done for impartial elections.

The President pointed out that, as a constitutional body, the Election

Commission has initiated all steps to hold free and fair elections. He assured the envoy of fair polls going to be held in the country, following such comprehensive groundwork.

"The party who will secure electoral mandate will form the next government," he told the UN emissary.

Reiterating country's commitment to the United Nations, the president said Bangladesh has been playing a lead role in various programs of the world body, including the UN peacekeeping mission.

He thanked the UN secretary general for extending cooperation in advancing democratic process in Bangladesh.

In response, the special envoy said the UN does not like to see any political violence in Bangladesh and noted that all problems can be resolved through the holding of peaceful elections.

"The United Nations is concerned at the violence on street," Genness was quoted by a President House spokesman as saying during the meeting with the President. He thanked the chief advisor for taking the initiatives for holding free and fair polls.

The envoy requested the chief advisor to take steps for establishment of peace in the country.

Genness informed the president that he would convey the UN Secretary General's concern about "political violence" during his meetings with the leaders of major political parties.

Both the President and the envoy observed with unanimity of views that all parties should come forward, realizing the reality, for maintaining peace and advancing democracy in the country.

Since the former ruling BNP-led 4-party alliance government led by former prime minister Khaleda Zia ended its tenure on Oct. 27, the former main opposition Awami League (AL)-led 14-party combine had staged three rounds of countrywide blockade demanding reconstitution of Election Commission paving way for fair elections due in January next.

Awami League announced Monday if their demands are not met, they will stage another round of blockade from Sunday.

During the blockades, there were dozens of people killed and thousands wounded in clashes between supporters of BNP and AL. The country's economy suffered a great loss.

According to the Constitution, a neutral caretaker government supervises the country's elections within 90 days since 1996.

*Source: Xinhua*

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/world/international-bangladesh-politics.html>

By REUTERS  
November 4, 2006  
Filed at 9:09 a.m. ET

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As political situation in Bangladesh was rapidly changing, the readers may have noticed, media reports that the US Ambassador Patricia A. Butenis used to call me on exclusively during those days. In the meetings, we shared our common views, which were to protect and sustain our newborn democracy. I also went to 'Habib Villa' (US Ambassador's Dhaka Residence) to discuss with Butenis. Sometimes Deputy Chief of Mission Geeta Passi joined there. What we agreed is that we have to guard our interests, even with help from our friendly countries. Our international partners were pledge bound to extend their cooperation to our mission of democracy. We wanted to ensure democracy to be continued, which has been in the priority list of the UN, the EU, the Commonwealth and developed countries such as the USA, the UK, Australia, France, China and Japan. With reference to the Ambassador Butenis, one morning of those days, the Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns telephoned me from Washington D.C. We discussed the prevailing Bangladeshi political situation on the phone. At the request of Nicholas, I arranged a discussion between Bangladesh and America on my mobile phone, where the President also joined later in the evening. Assistant Secretary of State of USA Richard A. Boucher spoke with us on the same occasion. That was a fruitful discussion indeed. Following this, as Richard expressed his interest to visit Bangladesh, which needed an invitation from the host country according to the diplomatic procedure, we responded positively in no time. Then acting Foreign Secretary and DG, America & Pacific were waiting at my office. I instructed them to send an official invitation on behalf of our government to Richard Boucher to make the visit.

Dr Muhammad Yunus stood by our government strongly. We accorded a reception in his honour at the Bangabhaban following the announcement

of his receiving the Noble Peace Prize. Upon receiving the news, in no time I congratulated him on phone for receiving the prestigious award which earned honour for our country as well. Subsequently, Dr. Yunus asked the government of Iajuddin Ahmed to deal all destructive activities with a message to deliver a strong rule. He addressed the President at the reception of Bangabhaban, “whole country is with you and please go ahead with strong rule. Please establish a strong government”.

Coming back to the issue of our parley with the UN and the US, accordingly, the visit of the US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher has happened, where we worked out modalities that other than democracy nothing will be acceptable. Not only Boucher during his meeting with us on 11 November 2006 at Bangabhaban, Butenis also categorically commented that the demand of resignation of President from the position of Chief Adviser was impractical. Defying the USA and the UN’s strong position in favour of us, Moeen and his accomplices betrayed that day blackmailing all concerned. They used a group of politicians, civil bureaucrats, civil society, professionals including media and businessmen.

The visiting Assistant Secretary of State of USA Richard Boucher categorically spoke on probable military intervention in Bangladesh that day. The Daily Star reports on 12 November 2007:

Military intervention won't help elections  
Boucher says CG & EC must act neutrally  
Diplomatic Correspondent



The United States yesterday said a military takeover would not help conduct a free and fair election in Bangladesh and urged the caretaker government and Election Commission (EC) to act neutrally to ensure each vote is counted and results are trusted.

"The situation here is difficult but the goal is [to hold] a free and fair election. I don't think a military takeover would contribute to that goal. That will be a bad thing to do," US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Richard Boucher told a press conference at the American Club.

Boucher who arrived in the capital yesterday to assess the pre-election ground situation also called on the political leadership to lower the level of tension and violence and hold peaceful demonstrations so that voters get educated about elections.

"The voters need a fair choice. They need to make their decision through free and fair elections where each vote is counted and respected," he said.

Faced with a volley of questions on the chief election commissioner (CEC), he said he would not talk about any particular individual. As a whole, the EC has a very important role to play in ensuring the elections are acceptable, he added.

"Our view is.... a great responsibility lies with the Election Commission and they need to exercise that responsibility fairly but carefully in accordance with the constitution and avoid any outside influence so that people trust their decisions and election results," he said.

Richard Boucher, who will meet President and Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed today, said the caretaker government must carry out its task in a neutral manner so that any of its decisions does not favour any particular political party.

There are a lot of issues to be settled by the caretaker government that needs more time to set up the groundwork for a free, fair, peaceful and credible election, he noted.

When asked about his meetings with BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina, he said both the leaders want free and fair elections and it would be better for them to reach a consensus on the issues respecting the constitutional process.

Asked how the election could be credible without participation of AL that seeks resignation of the CEC, the visiting US official said he hopes all political parties would participate in the polls and the EC should make

sure that the people trust its decisions.

Boucher said both the political parties have a lot of experience in politics and they could easily settle many of the controversies.

He said the US would send observers to monitor the upcoming general election.

Terming the Dhaka-Washington relations excellent, he said his country would continue co-operating with Bangladesh, no matter what party gets elected to power in future.

He said despite Republican debacle in the midterm elections, the US government would carry on its efforts to strengthen democracy, healthcare and economic progress.

Above report is the proof of my successful diplomacy against Moeen's conspiracy. Mentionable, some newspapers including the Daily Star critically reported our activities during those days of Bangabhaban.

Regarding US Ambassador's meeting with the President, it did not like or did not believe my briefing on the said meeting. In this circumstance, it approached the Ambassador, which I was informed that time. When Butenis supported my briefing and said I was the right authority and official spokesperson to brief the media. Then the newspaper reported with my quotations. One such instance is that the Daily Star reported then PM's Political Secretary was in favour of me. But reality was reverse.

Harris Chowdhury was dead against me all along. He succeeded in conspiracy to stop my appointment in a diplomatic position. Later, he also lobbied against my appointment of Press Secretary first and then prior to my ministerial appointment of Adviser to the President, which he failed in both instances. In addition, Harris stopped the process of appointing former Chief Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury for the position of the Chief Adviser of the Caretaker Government in 2006. A section of media was serving army chief and against me purposefully. They backed military led government later.

The said report of the Daily Star on my briefing on the President's meeting



with the US Ambassador, can be seen below-

CA's resignation 'impractical'

*Says US envoy*

Staff Correspondent

US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis yesterday said some political parties' demand for resignation of the president from the office of chief adviser (CA) is 'impractical'.

Adviser to the President Mokhlesur Rahman Chowhdury in a news conference disclosed Butenis' remark following a 30-minute meeting between the president and the US envoy in Bangabhaban yesterday where they discussed issues concerning the next election.

"The US ambassador told the president that the demand of some political parties for resignation of President Iajuddin Ahmed from the post of chief adviser is impractical," Mokhles told reporters.

"I have told them (the political parties) their demand is impractical," the president's adviser quoted the US envoy as telling the president.

Two issues featured prominently in the discussion -- the deployment of the armed forces in aid of the civil administration and resignations of the four advisers, Mokhles said.

Later talking to the reporters, the US ambassador said she told the president that the resignations of four advisers were 'unfortunate' as they are honourable personalities and patriots.

She said the president agreed with her but told her that the four new advisers are also firmly committed to working following the footsteps of their predecessors.

About reconstitution of the Election Commission (EC), the president told Butenis that if both the parties agree he would request Election Commissioners SM Zakaria and Modabbir Hossain Chowdhury to go on leave. The president believes the election commissioners would agree to go on leave if both the parties reach a consensus on the matter, Mokhles said.

Consulting with the two major political alliances, the council of advisers headed by Iajuddin in last week finalised a package of proposals including sending of Election Commissioners Zakaria and Modabbir on leaves of absence and appointing new election commissioners to reconstitute the EC. But the president in a sudden move appeared opposed to the idea of sending Zakaria on a leave of absence and unilaterally deployed the armed forces to maintain law and order, prompting resignations of four advisers.

Following non-implementation of the package proposal, Awami League (AL)-led 14-party coalition, Liberal Democratic Party-led National Unity Front, some small political parties and different organisations of professionals have bolstered their demands for resignation of Iajuddin

from the office of CA and appointment of a 'neutral person' to the post.

The president's adviser in an unusual move yesterday invited journalists in his office in Bangabhaban and briefed them about the discussion between the president and the US envoy.

The US ambassador discussed issues concerning the next month's parliamentary election and reiterated the US position of preferring holding of a non-violent, free, fair and credible election.

The president informed Butenis that the caretaker government has taken all necessary steps to hold a free, fair and neutral election in a peaceful environment and the US ambassador expressed her satisfaction over the measures initiated by the government so far, Mokhles said.

"The United States will continue supporting the caretaker government in holding a free and fair election for continuity of the constitutional and democratic process," Butenis was quoted by Mokhles as saying.

The president's adviser said Iajuddin and the US envoy agreed that political parties have come very close to solving the crisis and to overcoming their disagreements on electoral issues, leaving only some trivial matters unsettled.

They hoped that the parties would come forward to resolve the trivial disagreements through their wisdom, intelligence, farsightedness and sense of patriotism.

Butenis also apprised the president of her meetings with four-party alliance leader Khaleda Zia and 14-party coalition leader Sheikh Hasina.

On the army deployment, Butenis observed that it is necessary to ensure that the army acts neutrally. They will monitor whether the forces deployed in aid of the civil administration are working neutrally, she added.

President and CA Iajuddin Ahmed assured the US envoy that all the forces will discharge their duties neutrally during the election just like they did in the past. "I have already directed the administration and all the forces to work neutrally," he was quoted by Mokhles as saying.-

Published on 14 December 2006.

["The people of Bangladesh deserve free, fair, non-violent and credible elections", says US Under-Secretary Of State]

<http://www.thedailystar.net/2006/11/30/d6113001033.htm>

Daily Star, Dhaka, Bangladesh  
Thursday, November 30, 2006

Nicholas Burns on Bangladesh

The United States has observed that the willingness of Bangladeshi politicians to bury their differences of opinions is the key issue for the country at present.

Speaking at the Asian Society dinner in Washington on Monday, US State Department's Under-Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns also noted that despite these concerns, Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr Mohammad Yunus has earned an important distinction for Bangladesh.

"Can its (Bangladesh) leadership put aside their differences to lead the country forward in peace? That is the central question to ask as we approach 2007," Burns said. He also noted that there are reasons to be concerned about the current state of political violence as the country moves toward elections in January.

The under-secretary also urged the political parties to resolve their differences through dialogue, as "The people of Bangladesh deserve free, fair, non-violent and credible elections."

Burns, however, feels that in stark contrast to the political concerns, Dr Yunus provides a positive vision for the country. "Bangladesh has recently earned an important distinction, it's citizen Mohammed Yunus and the Grameen Bank won the Nobel Peace Prize for their ground-breaking efforts in micro-credit and other initiatives."

"He is a remarkably selfless person and he inspired me with his ambitious and even audacious vision that all of the families in his country should have access to capital to improve their lives," Burns said adding he met with Dr Yunus in Washington last week to discuss how the US can implement its own foreign assistance more effectively for maximum impact.

Burns also stressed the pivotal importance of Bangladesh to the future of South Asia because of its "Advantage of size, a growing economy, and a talented population."

The US under-secretary, however, feels that Bangladesh must effectively tackle corruption and failure to do so, will undermine confidence in government and in the Bangladeshi economy. The US will work with civil society and Bangladeshis to help combat corruption, he added.

The speech titled "US Policy in South Asia" was published in the US

Department of State website.

Top U.S. Official Set for Talks in Bangladesh  
By REUTERS

Skip to next paragraph DHAKA (Reuters) - A top State Department official will visit Bangladesh shortly to assess the volatile political situation ahead of elections next January, the U.S. embassy said on Saturday.

Richard Boucher, assistant secretary of state for south and central Asia, was expected to meet President Iajuddin Ahmed, who is also the head of Bangladesh's interim government, an embassy spokesman said.

Boucher might also meet former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and her arch rival Sheikh Hasina, another ex-premier who heads the Awami League party.

Iajuddin took over as head of the caretaker authority last Sunday after Khaleda's five-year term ended.

At least 25 people were killed and hundreds injured in three days of violent protests over who should lead the three-month administration until the January polls.

Since then, Ambassador Patricia A. Butenis has shuttled between rival camps, meeting Hasina, Khaleda and leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islami party and the Jatiya Party led by former military ruler Hossain Mohammad Ershad.

Political analysts believe a visit by Boucher would boost efforts by Butenis to disengage the warring sides, at least for a week while Iajuddin tries to accommodate the demands of Hasina and her allies to make the voting free and fair.

These include the removal of Chief Election Commissioner M.A. Aziz and his deputies, whom the opposition accuse of bias toward Khaleda's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat.

The interim authority, comprising the president and 10 advisers, will run the country and oversee the elections.

Boucher visited Bangladesh in August and urged political leaders to cooperate to hold a free, fair and credible election.

On Saturday, thousands of supporters of Khaleda's BNP and Jamaat attended a noisy rally in Dhaka.

A two-member team from the Commonwealth Secretariat arrived in Dhaka on Saturday to conduct a pre-election assessment, officials said.

## **International moves on to end ~~Bangladesh~~ political deadlock**

WEBINDIA123.com

Asia

Dhaka | November 30, 2006 2:20:59 PM IST

Alongside a number of local initiatives, international quarters have launched moves to forge a negotiation between the two major Bangladeshi political camps, sharply divided between Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, over the holding of the January general elections peacefully.

The deadlock, which was about to end with Chief Election Commissioner M A Aziz's decision to step aside last week in the face of a mass movement, intensified again on Monday when President Iajuddin Ahmed appointed two more controversial commissioners to the Election Commission, and the commission hastily announced the polls schedule with January 21 as the date for voting.

The Awami League-led political alliance has rejected the polls schedule and called upon the people to enforce another round of transport blockades across the country.

Concerned by the political turmoil, the United Nations sent an emissary to negotiate between the opposing parties, especially to pursue them for taking part in the general elections.

"I have come here to support free, fair and democratic elections as the people of this country want peaceful elections," the UN secretary general's special envoy, Craig Jenness who is now visiting Bangladesh, told reporters on Wednesday.

"All the major political parties should participate in the parliamentary polls and get equal scope for contest," Jenness, who met President Iajuddin Ahmed and AL chief Sheikh Hasina, said.

He underscored for holding dialogue to resolve issues, whatever they are.

The European Union, United States, United Kingdom, Canada, [Australia](#) and some Asian countries, including [China](#) and Japan, have also taken up simultaneous moves to bridge the division among the caretaker government, Election Commission and political camps to help to ensure credible elections.

The US Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs, John Gastight Jr, is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on December 3 on a two-day official visit to convey his government's stance for acceptable elections

with the participation of all the major political parties in Bangladesh.

During his visit, he is expected to meet the chief adviser, advisers and top leaders of major political parties and civil society representatives.

The US Ambassador in Dhaka, Patricia A Butenis, on Wednesday night met with the immediate past prime minister, Khaleda Zia, to discuss Gastight's planned parley with Khaleda in the milieu of current political standoff.

It would be a 'follow-up' mission, within a month, in Bangladesh after the visit of the US assistant secretary of state, Richard Boucher, over the political [developments](#) in few months.

The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Anwar Choudhury, also held a meeting with Khaleda Zia, Tuesday evening presumably on issues concerning the parliamentary elections.

The Australian High Commissioner, Douglas Foskett, on Wednesday met President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban, the presidential palace, where both of them observed that it is not important which party comes to power, rather the holding of fair elections was what mattered the most.

The UN resident coordinator, Renata Lok Dessalien, European Union ambassador Stefan Frowein, and envoys of the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, [Australia](#) and some Asian countries also held separate parleys with the chief adviser, advisers, Election Commission and the key political leaders apparently to help to resolve the current political impasse

Meanwhile, President Iajuddin Ahmed sent his adviser Mokhlesur Rahman Chowdhury to the Awami League president, Sheikh Hasina, and the BNP chairperson, Khaleda Zia, apparently to resolve the current political stalemate. Nobel Peace prize winner Muhammad Yunus has also urged the two major political camps to reach a 'peace accord' to avoid conflicts.

He suggested that even for forming a coalition government, political stability in Bangladesh was essential. (ANI)

<http://news.webindia123.com/news/articles/asia/20061130/522746.html>

On the morning of '1/11', I received the UN Secretary General Ban-ki moon's statement, which was handed over to the President. That asked to hold a participatory election and simultaneously to stop street violence. The message was literally issued for both the rival parties of the country with specific meaning. It can be understood by any lay man that the UN cannot invite military intervention in any member country. The European Union - EU's position was stronger against military

takeover than political violence. Commonwealth's standing decision was to expel any country where Martial Law is declared. Latest examples of this were Fiji and Pakistan.

I had contact with the then Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon, apart from UN Secretary General Kofi A. Annan. Following my contact, Commonwealth Secretary General McKinnon reiterated his organisation's position and warned any possible military intervention in Bangladesh in December 2006.

At the backdrop of turbulent political situation, a statement issued by the United Nations on 10 January 2007, where new Secretary General Ban Ki-moon urged all sides in Bangladesh crisis to 'refrain from violence'. A press report on this issue can be seen below-

*Secretary-General Ban urges all sides in Bangladesh crisis to 'refrain from violence'*  
10 January 2007 –

*Warning that the political crisis in Bangladesh has "severely jeopardized the legitimacy" of this month's planned elections, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today urged all sides to refrain from violence and seek compromise, adding he hopes the army will continue to play a neutral role.*

*"The announced cancellation of numerous international observation missions is regrettable. The United Nations has had to suspend all technical support to the electoral process, including by closing its International Coordination Office for Election Observers in Dhaka," Mr. Ban's spokesperson said in a [statement](#) referring to the country's capital.*

*"The United Nations is deeply concerned by the deteriorating situation in the country, and urges all parties to refrain from the use of violence. It is hoped that the army will continue to play a neutral role, and that those responsible for enforcing the law act with restraint and respect for human rights."*

*"The United Nations urges the non-party Caretaker Government and Election Commission to create a level playing field and ensure parties can have confidence in the electoral process."*

*"The United Nations is concerned that Bangladesh's democratic advances and international standing will be negatively affected if the current crisis continues. It urges all concerned to seek a compromise that will serve the interests of peace, democracy and the country's overall well-being."*

*The impoverished South Asian nation is slated to hold national elections on 22 January, but demonstrations and clashes between supporters of rival political groups since late October have left many people dead, according to media reports. A multi-party opposition alliance has also reportedly boycotted the polls.*

The UN Secretary General's abovementioned statement can be accessed from the UN document below-

[https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ui=2&ik=4d7a4e1841&view=fimg&th=1487b371b5ebd9c1&attid=0.2&disp=inline&realattid=f\\_i000qtad1&safe=1&attbid=ANGjdJ9pBuGW1EbX2zpFGqqD2rRmHzo6dMkPlhvjW1QyF54ufSCGtC-EOtUATvrTnizSLL3N-vTJbBfjdWtUHYqe-02tKVrSkUd\\_jJ5u-1roagTTZoCBJWCjABjzdro&ats=1415121347526&rm=1487b371b5ebd9c1&zw&sz=w1256-h813](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ui=2&ik=4d7a4e1841&view=fimg&th=1487b371b5ebd9c1&attid=0.2&disp=inline&realattid=f_i000qtad1&safe=1&attbid=ANGjdJ9pBuGW1EbX2zpFGqqD2rRmHzo6dMkPlhvjW1QyF54ufSCGtC-EOtUATvrTnizSLL3N-vTJbBfjdWtUHYqe-02tKVrSkUd_jJ5u-1roagTTZoCBJWCjABjzdro&ats=1415121347526&rm=1487b371b5ebd9c1&zw&sz=w1256-h813)

## **The way Moeen blackmailed the UN**

Lt. Gen. Moeen wanted to establish that the UN asked Armed Forces of Bangladesh to intervene on 11 January 2007. His motto was to justify his coup in the name of stopping one sided election. My argument is, if that was a genuine reason, the question is why the UN could not stop the efforts of one sided election in Bangladesh in 2014. Why military did not pursue the State of Emergency again like 2007.

Prior to '1/11', Moeen U. Ahmed made a phone call to Jean-Marie Guehenno, an Under Secretary of the UN, who was in charge of 'Peace Keeping Mission', but he was not at his office at that time. Later Guehenno called Moeen back out of courtesy, which was blackmailed by latter, saying the UN asked him to takeover power. Actually, he wanted to make everybody fool. The reality was that other than the Secretary General, nobody was entitled to issue any statement on this highly political situation.

Like other military dictators, Moeen, a power hungry general, did spread rumour to all cantonments in the morning of '1/11' deliberately. Meanwhile, he served Brigadier Khaled Musharraf, a dictator for a short while in November 1975 after joining Bangladesh army in the same year. Then two groups of army arrested the then President Khandker Mushtaq Ahmed and the Army Chief Major General (later Lt. General) Ziaur Rahman respectively. Moeen was one of the army officers, who were in charge of the operation at Bangabhaban, confined the President (Shantir Swapne Somoyer Smriticharan 2008). According to him, since then he made his aim in life to



become the President. When Khaled Musharraf's coup had failed after about four days, Moeen fled away from Bangabhaban, the Presidential Palace cum Office jumped through the wall from there and joined the mass procession comprising civilian and army on the street, which initiated a changeover on 7 November 1975. The two army officers have a similarity. For instance, Khaled Musharraf promoted himself as Major General on 3 November 1975 and Moeen U. Ahmed promoted himself following his coup in 2007. Another similarity is both coup failed to achieve their goal. In contrast, Moeen ruled the country for two years and could not have succeeded to become the President. It is said that since 1975 there has been a trend in the most of army officers that they wanted to be the President. Arguably, to become President is no wrong, but problem is using gun to occupy state power illegally. Looking back, since my early life my aim in life was to become the President of Bangladesh to serve the humanity, which was known to all those who were related to me. Based on the fact, first, I became the Press Secretary to the President switching over from journalism career when I was the President of Overseas Correspondents Association Bangladesh – OCAB. Eventually I was appointed the Adviser to the President and Minister in a very crucial regime.

Coming back to military takeover in 2007, on '1/11', Moeen also instigated army rank and file spreading rumour that he was going to be sacked and to be replaced by DG of NSI Major General Rezzakul Haider Chowdhury, which was totally baseless and false. Meanwhile, prior to Moeen's appointment as army chief in 2005, another Razzakul Haider, who was a senior general, was selected by the then Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. It may be noted that the NSI DG was a junior general. He was promoted from Brigadier General to Major General few months ago. He told, they wanted to make him an escape goat. Moeen propagated that the government created traffic jam in the capital city - Dhaka and also in wireless system so that he could not get the message through the cantonments. However, all these were concocted, fabricated and false. Notable, there were three groups in army. Major General

Aminul Karim minimised gaps among them. He invited Moeen to enter Bangabhaban on '1/11'. In return, as indicated earlier, he managed a promotion to the rank of Lt.General later.

**Excerpt is Renata's statement on 1/11:**

*MEDIA RELEASE*

*Attn: News Editor / Chief Reporter 11 January 2007*

*Press Statement by UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Renata Lok Dessallien, Dhaka*

*The United Nations is deeply concerned about the deteriorating political situation in Bangladesh. The national authorities have not yet succeeded in establishing conditions for Parliamentary Elections in which all parties feel they can contest freely, fairly and peacefully.*

*A strong statement of concern has just been issued by the UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the third such statement in the last three months.*

*An election in Bangladesh under current circumstances without the participation of major political parties would not be considered credible or legitimate.*

*The Armed Forces have recently been fully deployed in support of an election that some major political parties have decided to boycott.*

*The Armed Forces, including Police, play a major role in UN Peacekeeping Operations around the world, and are doing excellent job.*

*The United Nations appreciates the traditional role played by the Bangladesh Armed Forces in support of previous, fully contested elections through the maintenance of law and order, so citizens can exercise their right of franchise. However, should the 22 January Parliamentary Elections proceed without participation of all major political parties, deployment of the Armed Forces in support of the election process raises questions. This may have implications for Bangladesh's future role in UN Peacekeeping Operations.*

*United Nations Under-Secretary-Generals Mr. Ibrahim Gambari and Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno of the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations respectively, will be contacting Bangladesh's Political, Caretaker Government and Military leaders tonight in this regard.*

*END...*

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On the 12 January 2007 the Daily Star carried a report created by the news agency AFP, which supported the role played by Renata and blackmailed by Moeen. The report is as follows:

UN threatens Bangladesh's peacekeeping role  
Afp, Dhaka

The United Nations yesterday threatened to strip the Bangladesh army of its prestigious and lucrative international 'blue helmet' peacekeeping duties if it mobilised to support disputed elections this month.

The warning came after the country's president declared a state of emergency and imposed a night curfew amid escalating tension ahead of polls, scheduled to take place on January 22.

"The United Nations appreciates the traditional role played by the Bangladesh armed forces in support of previous fully contested elections through the maintenance of law and order," said UN resident coordinator Renata Lok Dessallien in a statement.

"However, should the 22 January parliamentary elections proceed without participation of all major political parties, deployment of the armed forces in support of the election process raises questions. This may have implications for Bangladesh's future role in peacekeeping operations," she added.

The Awami League and its allies are boycotting the elections, demanding a total overhaul of the voter list and a swathe of other reforms.

It may be mentioned that before and after the '1/11' Moeen and Renata met a couple of times. They used to maintain excellent relations. Additionally, Renata did not deny Moeen's claim that the UN especially she as UN Resident Coordinator on behalf of the UN supported him. She also did not make clear about her abovementioned statement. When Moeen published his book 'Shantir Swapne Somoyer Smriticharan', Renata did not protest and refuse her involvement in '1/11' as army chief argued.

At last after three years, Renata refused her role in military takeover in 2007, which was played by in favour of Moeen when she was leaving Bangladesh completing her UN assignment. She addressed a press conference on 17 April 2010. Renata's latest statement was published in the newspapers on 18 April 2010 on the eve of her departure.

The Daily Star reported Renata Lok Dessallien's statement's about her role centring '1/11' of 2007. The news was published on 18 April 2010, which can be read below-

# No letter from UN, no int'l interference

Outgoing resident coordinator Renata tells *The Daily Star* about post-emergency rumour in 2007



Rezaul Karim: International community did not interfere in any way and the UN did not send any letter that apparently led to the postponement of January 22, 2007 election and declaration of state of emergency, said outgoing UN Resident Coordinator Renata Lok Dessallien.

“International community including the UN did not interfere in Bangladesh's internal affairs...our only concern was to create a congenial atmosphere conducive to holding a free, fair and impartial election,” she said in an interview with *The Daily Star*.

She categorically said the UN did not send any 'special letter' to the then Bangladesh government. “There was no interference. There was continuous urge for accommodation,” she added.

Renata, who is going to take up her new assignment in China after more than a three-year eventful tenure in Bangladesh, did not agree with former Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed's contention that Bangladesh Army personnel would have lost jobs in the UN peacekeeping mission if the army had played any role in the general election originally slated for January 22, 2007.

“This was never discussed,” Renata added.

The former army chief in his book “Shantir Swapne” (Dream for Peace) said he received a phone call on January 11, 2007 from UN Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping Guehenno who told him that the elections without participation of all political parties would not be acceptable.

“If the army plays any role in such elections, the UN will consider with due importance the withdrawal of Bangladeshi armies from the UN peacekeeping missions,” Moeen quoted Guehenno as saying over the phone.

Renata said the UN secretary general expressed his concern over street violence on several occasions including those in October 2006 and early 2007.

She said several missions of the UN electoral specialists visited Bangladesh while the secretary general appointed a personal envoy who visited Dhaka in December 2006.

The envoy had meetings with major political parties and urged them repeatedly to hold dialogues, to be accommodative and to find a solution that both political alliances could accept.

“Telephone calls from high level UN officials to Dhaka were made to try to defuse the rising tensions so as to allow more space and time for the parties to negotiate an acceptable solution,” Renata said.

The UN official said when the UN secretary general and any UN staff makes any statement, the copy is sent to the respective governments ahead of the issuance of such statements to the press according to international practice.

Asked about separate meetings of western diplomats with senior Awami League and BNP leaders at the residence of the Canadian high commissioner on January 11, 2007, Renata said the meeting with the BNP leaders was dispersed in the afternoon as the news of declaring the state of emergency had been circulated by that time.

She said the main message of all these statements and meetings were to resolve the issue through dialogue and in non-violent fashion.

When asked about the performance of the Fakhruddin Ahmed's Caretaker Government, Renata said, “we focused on elections but general criticisms were that the government was doing too much and it had broad agenda.”

Renata recalled a number of impediments like two floods, cyclone, food crisis in the wake of price hike of food and oil in the international market and spread of avian flu. It is difficult for a caretaker government with 10 advisers to deal with all these problems, she continued.

Terming Bangladesh a complex country, she said, “Managing a complex country like Bangladesh, I think, is even more difficult. Each government faces challenges to implement its policies.”

Asked about the performance of Awami League government Renata said the Bangladeshi people have to evaluate it. She said energy is a big challenge while population is increasing. Each year there is bigger crisis in energy sector, she said, adding that it will take time to resolve the problem.

Explaining UN's position on the trial of war criminals, she said the UN has received a request from Bangladesh government for information about how war crime tribunal operates in the context of other countries.

The UN has responded positively as we consider it important to share lessons of international experience with Bangladesh authorities in order to help them meet international standard, she said.

Renata, however, said the UN has not been asked for any other form of assistance in connection with Bangladesh's war crime trials, nor has it offered any additional assistance.

Asked about her farewell meetings with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia, Renata said the energy and water shortages as well as other challenges like food security and disaster preparedness were discussed.

Renata stressed the need for strengthening democratic institutions to deepen democracy in Bangladesh and said since parliament is one of the most important institutions in any democracy all parties should sit in parliament and put their different agenda on the table for constructive debates.

She highly appreciated the formation of the parliamentary standing committees during the first session where chairs of the seven committees were given to other political parties. She also welcomed BNP's return to Jatiya Sangsad ending their long boycott.

Expressing her firm conviction that Bangladesh has a bright prospect, the UN official said the country has demonstrated its remarkable capacity to overcome crises -- from the War of Independence to repeated floods and cyclones, to food security and many more areas.

"I do not minimise the very real and pressing problems that currently face the country.... all that's required is the strengthening of good governance. The key is already in the hands of decision makers. If their time and energy is spent in patronage pursuits serving special interest groups or individual interests, overall social progress will be sub-optimal and beset with setbacks," she added.

As the Independent of Bangladesh reported on '1/11':

Dhaka, Friday 12 March 2010 / 28 Falgun 1416 / 25 Rabiul Awal 1431

## **Iajuddin was forced to promulgate emergency: Mukhles**

STAFF REPORTER

A former adviser to the immediate past President Professor Dr Iazuddin yesterday said that taking advantage of the rivalry among the political parties General Moeen U Ahmed and some ambitious military officers had held president Dr Iazuddin hostage under gun point and forced him to install a puppet government through promulgation of state of emergency on January 11, 2007.

Mukhles, press adviser to the former president was in Bangabhaban on January 11, 2007 when top army officers met the president, said this while addressing a discussion meeting in London to mark the third anniversary of the 1/11.

"1/11 is a black scar on the history of the nation. It pushed the country 20 years back. The puppet government comprised some persons who had foreign citizenship and they did not hesitate to take steps harming the interest of the country. The architects of the 1/11 destroyed all the key institutions of the country, and in the name of anti-corruption drive they snatched away human rights of the people", he said adding that they forcefully realized thousands of cores of Taka from businessmen and siphoned the money abroad.

He also alleged that during the period between October 28 of 2006 to January 11 of 2007, General Moeen made attempts to promulgate state of emergency thrice but those were foiled.

Mokhles said that General Moeen tried to promulgate Martial Law in the country by January 12, 2007 did not succeed.

"General Moeen forced the President to sign documents relating to promulgation of state of emergency arguing that there was provision in the constitution for emergency rule. General Moeen also ousted me from Bangabhaban without the permission of the President. I came under attack twice - on April 26 and on September 7 in 2007.

He alleged that the incident of 1/11 caused serious harm to the morale and professionalism of the army, which was used for serving personal interest.

<http://www.theindependent-bd.com/details.php?nid=157523>

### **Cancellation of Ershad's nomination**

Foreign diplomats, based in Dhaka, did not take cancellation of H. M. Ershad's nomination in 2007 easy. They made a visit to his residence and expressed solidarity with him on that occasion. According to them, nothing is secret or hide and seek. They knew that former State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar was behind to disqualify Ershad through court in a short cut process. It was open secret to diplomats and conscious people. Earlier, Same Babar went to Ershad's house to bring latter back in the fold of 4 Party alliances. At the same time, Babar had connections with his political high command and with Army Chief Lt. General Moeen. He also maintained relations with western diplomats. Babar was playing vital role to split BNP and worked hard under Abdul Mannan Bhuyian. Later when that project failed and Moeen was asked to stop splitting political forces, hold elections and hand over power to the politicians, then Moeen's another strong hand Brigadier Amin led arresting Babar at a later stage.

It was evident that I have brought all political parties in the election by meeting their demands, although that was a very challenging job. But by cancelling Ershad's nomination, all efforts were made dysfunctional as agitating parties withdrew en masse their nomination on 3 January from the 22 January election, which paved the path to army chief and his group to declare the State of Emergency in Bangladesh in 2007.

European Union-EU was very vocal on political situation from October 2006 to January 2007. Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson acted undiplomatically during the period. Australian High Commissioner Douglas Fosket was cooperative and time to time he along with Butenis appreciated my role. There was a group called 'Tuesday group' which comprises western diplomats based in

Dhaka, who used to meet Tuesday. Time to time they made statements on Bangladesh political issues, which had adverse affect on the people. They thought the diplomats were cooking something or they were facilitating any move that was going on at that time.

At the initial stage, US Ambassador asked me to do something visible. When she saw that I was actively pursuing to solve the ongoing political impasses, having meeting with Sheikh Hasina and her representatives and also met almost all their demands then she was also serious in front of AL Chief. Consequently, Butenis understood the situation of Bangladesh well. She conveyed to AL Chief: 'if now you don't participate in election, something extra constitutional will happen and you will be held responsible'. Likewise, Allegations against Anwar Chowdhury were, 1). He talks much and 2). He lobbied Awami League high command for a probable candidate's nomination. Choudhury's position was on that due to the person being his relative. The person later became MP with AL ticket from one of the Sylhet constituencies on 29 December 2008 election. High Commissioner Chowdhury was also under surveillance by his own British Government.

Following my diplomacy with the UN and especially with the USA, all concerned agreed to help Bangladesh on the point of democracy. At my manoeuvre, two diplomats met army chief and Principal Staff Officer - PSO Major General Jahangir Alam Chowdhury on the 8 and 9 January 2007 and informed their common position that Martial Law will not be accepted, if there is a martial law all Bangladeshi peace keepers will be back home and in this case (if martial law is declared), there will be sanctions imposed on Bangladesh from the UN. That changed Moeen and his accomplices to go back to original option of the State of Emergency. When there was the move of the State of Emergency, I called Butenis. She replied on this issue that martial law has already been stopped. However, if it is the State of Emergency, Bangladesh Constitution allowed declaring it. We cannot help it. On this very day concerned top politician did not receive call of myself and other related leaders as I



was asked to declare that earlier. As being opposing, was also questioned seriously that why I was doing so as the situation was very crucial. Contrarily, opposite camp was supporting the plan of declaration of the State of Emergency.

### **Later USA's support was sought to declare Martial Law**

According to an exclusive report of the Weekly Budhbar, after taking over state power at gun point in violation of his oath, Army Chief Moeen sent Brigadier General Chowdhury Fazlul Bari to the State Department of USA with a proposal to allow him to declare a martial law (Amader Shomoy 2009: ManabZamin 2009). By which, he would be the President of the country, lift martial law and will release all detainees. Then, among two former PMs, anyone could be the Prime Minister while another one to be Leader of the Opposition. Upon receiving the proposal officially, the State Department stated that what they were informed by the Presidential Adviser Mukhlesur Rahman Chowdhury as his observation, now it has proved (Bangladesh Worldwide 2013).

America followed its policy and asked the military authority to follow the Road Map to hold elections immediately and hand over power to the politicians. International diplomats had no other choices other than pursuing the Road Map to hold elections, when military intervention has already been occurred in disguise of the State of emergency. Initially a large number of people welcomed the change over in January 2007 without knowing the mode of military takeover as they were fed up with political chaos and anarchy. On the ground, agitating political parties made the situation very serious and a military group was instigating to make the ground, ultimately which had been established as the pretext. Evidently, the USA responded very positively to my 'Save Our Soul' - SOS to save our democracy.

### **A Counter Coup was failed**

During the visit of Lt. General Moeen U. Ahmed to Korea, a coup attempt was made in vain. Moeen made his visit short and came back home. Returning home he ousted Lt. General Masud Uddin Chowdhury and Brigadier General Chowdhury Fazlul Bari.

First Masud was sent to the National Defence College-NDC as the Commandant and within very short time the order was changed as he was transferred to Foreign Ministry. Subsequently General Masud was appointed Bangladesh High Commissioner to Australia. Brigadier Bari was made Defence Attaché to Bangladesh Embassy in USA. Eventually, Aminul Karim and A T M Amin betrayed them, which I forecasted. Meanwhile, after '1/11' Major General Masud was ousted from powerful '9 Division' of armed forces. It was termed by his colleagues that he was kicked upstairs. Indeed, then Major Gen. Masud was promoted to Lt. General, as he was appointed PSO in the army headquarters.

Although it was unlike, one of the major parties supported General Masud to oust Moeen. From the party high command, Major General Nizam and Major General Hakim were contacted to extend their support that move, which was against Moeen. But they did not agree on this as Moeen was powerful and they were loyal to him. A number of army officers were professional. Moeen used them and when his mission failed they were dumped to then Bangladesh Rifles – BDR (Presently Border Guard Bangladesh – BGB) and most of them were killed in a BDR mutiny occurred on 25/26 February 2009. According to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Moeen told for any operation against BDR, it needed two hours. Due to this, army operation into BDR Headquarters had not been happened at that time. In reality, army was standing by near Peelkhana (BDR Headquarter) and also was deployed at Dhanmandi Abahani Math, not very far from Peelkhana). It was argued that Moeen did not want any eyewitnesses of his military coup to remain. Consequently he became successful in this regard. Reportedly, Moeen managed some army officers' involvement with corruption, in order to check any threat from the army. Although, Moeen later argued that the PM was reluctant in taking any decision on BDR mutiny and she was in a happy mood having tea that time.

Regarding the issue of senior army officers' role, on two occasions, one Rashed connected me with Masud, while he underscored the need for making historic role by

me for our beloved country. But he could not elaborate, as he was eager to discuss the issue face to face. Bari came to me at Bangabhaban in an evening and there was a proposal to manage Khaleda Zia, which I did not agree. I was told to run the country for two years. A thousand people were listed for the planned trial. I told ultimately two lady leaders will also be tried, which was Moeen's motto and thus he will take over power. Brigadier did not believe this. On the one hand, Bari was loyal to Khaleda Zia and on the other, Moeen was his boss in the army as well as he was loyal to Moeen. There was also a point, which was believed by army officers that Khaleda Zia may not come back to power through election, but Moeen will remain. Many officers in army thought Chief of Army Staff is the symbol of the armed forces. Officers always respect their Chief much in the army. Consequently, senior army officers those who were superseded by Moeen, did forget that previously Moeen served under their command. Many of them showed regards to Moeen when he managed army chief's position. I could not make Brigadier Wazed Thakur and Lt. Commander Saiful Islam Duke understand too that Moeen will take over, he wanted to be the President, will arrest both Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina and attempt to arrange their trial. I told this to as many as concerned people involved in politics.

When I sent a letter of counter intelligence of DGFI, which supported my earlier prediction of military intervention, Khaleda Zia did not believe it. She told, she consulted with Brigadier Bari on this and was confirmed that the letter was baseless. Aminul Karim was desperate when I was consulting with Brigadier Wazed Thakur at my room on the letter issue. I also spoke with Bari on phone. Serious Aminul shamelessly entered my room and said this letter was nothing. He entered into that subject matter which I did not want to discuss with him. Aminul managed Bari and Thakur on this and connected with Army Chief. Moeen hypnotised Khaleda Zia, her nephew cum PS Duke and other concerned officials that he was very loyal to BNP. All these, he was acting, they could not realise. In Bangladesh, the first military coup was carried out by Brigadier Khaled Musharraf on 3 November 1975, which was an

abortive coup. It can be argued that 15 August 1975 changeover can be termed as first military coup. However, that was led by a civilian President, Khandker Mushtaq Ahmed, a senior leader of the then ruling party BAKSAL, which was originated into and re-emerged as Awami League again.

On the '1/11', I called US Ambassador Patricia A. Butenis and sought her cooperation to stop military intervention. She replied, at your request, the martial law was stopped and the State of Emergency is the part of the constitution of Bangladesh. The Ambassador also commented, both the lady leaders wanted the State of emergency, one thinks that she will be taken back to power and the one believed that this army takeover will make a change in the governance, which will help them eventually. Moeen failed to receive international support prior to so called '1/11' due to my shuttle diplomacy with a clear mission and vision in favour of democracy and constitutional rule. Later when he captured power by blackmailing all quarters including Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina and above all the people of Bangladesh at large by creating a volatile situation with instigation to 'Logi-Boitha event and making our army deployment in aid to civil power dysfunctional, his written proposal was turned down by the US administration, which also established my empirical argument, analysis and prediction. Sometimes, some army officers openly attacked foreign diplomats with different languages saying we should not be dictated by them. Contrarily, that illegitimate military government surrendered to foreign power for legitimising and accepting Army Chief as President. Although western countries sometimes have their own agenda for particular countries for some reasons, they have some popular issues such as democracy and good governance, which made them strict on the issue of continuity of democratic rule instead of military rule. I was disclosing since Moeen was lobbying for the post of head of army. Others including Modud Ahmed has been supporting this notion after 'the patient had died before the doctor came' i.e. after completion of his surgery of democracy in Bangladesh.

Following Moeen's coup, after a reasonable period, I came to UK surviving a couple of attempt to assassinate me with instigation of Moeen and Aminul Karim where DGFI and PGR were used on 26 February 2007, 7 September 2007 and 26 April 2008. After staying a couple of days I went to USA, where I had to stay for three months. Then I worked with the US administration as well as with the UN system, which worked to stop Moeen from becoming the President again. At the same time, letter of Moeen was sent to the US administration to allow him to be the President by declaration of a short period Martial Law.

On '1/11' General Masud told me at my room, you are a veteran and we need your help. Then Brigadier Bari was accompanying him. Bari wanted to disclose the news of curfew for the night and informed this to Principal Information Officer – PIO from my office phone. Brigadier Amin started liaison with foreign diplomats. He informed the US Ambassador that I was relieved from the government position while cited my previous position, which can be compared that he forgot he was second lieutenant the other day.

Likewise, there was a political unrest during the tenure of previous Army Chief General M. A. Mubin, who replaced General Moeen U. Ahmed. Similar situation emerged afterwards especially in 2013 and 2014. During the time of present regime there were a number of chaotic events occurring in Bangladesh. Among them, there were Hefazat-e-Islam's events of 6 April 2013 and 5 May 2014, where a number of people were killed by police and Para-military forces. There were also chaos and anarchy situation during ongoing countrywide street movement until 29 December 2013. During this time the UN Secretary General's envoy Oscar Farnandez Taranco made an exclusive parley in later part of 2013. Following the world body's mission, the UN asked to stop one party election of 5 January 2014 in Bangladesh. Then the Bangladeshi relevant actors and machinery did not respond acting or reacting on the situation, as they were not ambitious like General Moeen, which can be argued empirically.

It should be understood by all concerned that to capture and to remain in power does not depend on foreign powers. Rather, the internal forces are more important here. Due to internal forces unflinching support Sheikh Hasina remains in power and opposition failed to oblige the Government to adhere to the democratic process of government. International support may be a bonus or supplementary in this regard. India was more strongly supporting newly independent Bangladesh, which emerged with their direct involvement, during staging a coup in 1975, but it did not intervene then. According to the diplomat Pinak Ranjan, India worked with military regimes of Bangladesh also in the past. All the countries should work with each other whatever government is in the counterpart's country.

Foreign support is one of the factors, which create a notion at least among the mass that they are with the government or not. Before appointing Moeen the Army Chief, I gave five pages report recommending the responsible authority to refrain in making him Army Chief. I mentioned the reasons for this. What I hypothesised then, by the time it has been proved by testing. After attempting all those activities, even now Moeen has been issuing false (lie) statements on what he did during two years military rule, which is unlike by other generals ever those who attempted coup either successful or abortive. When power came to me, the political authority did not allow me to sack him, as he was more than loyal. I told even referring Sheikh Hasina's information that Moeen and his accomplices will torture Tarique Rahman and Arafat Rahman, make an attack at their Dhaka Cantonment's Shaheed Mainul Road's residence and oust them from there. Instead I was told that if there is a coup, there will be a counter coup. I did not believe that and ruled out. I requested not to cancel General H M Ershad's nomination in a short cut way, which was not listened to. What I achieved by bringing all parties, which include the 'Grand Alliance' in the fold of election, that was destroyed by cancelling the above.

Military takeover of 2007 was nothing, but an indigenous coup, which was absolutely born in the soil of Bangladesh, This notion was supported by the statement of Lt.

General Moeen U. Ahmed, when he made it clear at a conference in 2007 at then Dhaka Sheraton Hotel that Bangladesh needs own brand of democracy. Those who are looking for support of USA and the European Union - EU even to an extent to India, they should depend on people of Bangladesh. They are the main factors to decide who will come to power or who will remain in power. Military rulers also spoke about own brand democracy. Hence, our politicians must follow the rule of game of politics. What will happen in future, that will also be decided in the soil of Bangladesh again. I predicted earlier that Moeen will attempt to be the President and if he fails to achieve so, he will hand over power to opposition camp of BNP following the theory of 'enemy's enemy is my best friend'. Present politics of Bangladesh followed the path of most Middle – East countries in case of 'after coming to power it is easy to remain beyond the tenure' (Zakaria 2010:220). Consequently, Bangladeshi democracy has been emerged as prime ministerial form, instead of parliamentary form of government (Chowdhury 2013). In fact, authoritarianism was established in Bangladesh. It can be argued that the country is heading toward a totalitarian regime or totalitarianism.

After withdrawal of nominations by a number of political parties on 3 January 2007, Election Commission had to follow the constitution to go ahead with scheduled election, which was stopped by Moeen with support from the present ruling party. Ironically, in the name of following constitution an election was arranged in 2014, where DGFI was used massively and political leaders were arrested. The election was held without the participation of major opposition parties when army intervention was not required like 2007. During our regime, there was proposal from H. M. Ershad to hold election keeping AL out of the fold. Even after withdrawal of their nominations, that election could have been better than what AL did on last 5 January 2014. As if, Caretaker government is necessary for AL to come back to power and after their coming back it is redundant. Similarly, constitutional obligation is applicable for AL, not for others to hold election without other parties if necessary.

Evidence shows, the so called civil society, other than some exceptions, is silent on this.

Prior to planned 22 January 2007 election, following my meeting with Sheikh Hasina in the month of November 2006, a delegation of the AL called met on a couple of days exclusively at Hotel Sonargaon, Dhaka. It was led by Major General Tarique Siddique. There I followed up my meeting with the AL Chief and minimised gaps, which paved the path to solve the demands of rival political parties. I also met Khaleda Zia. Subsequently, I appraised the President Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed on these meetings, consulted with the stakeholders including the Advisory Council, Election Commission and we had been able to met most of demands of the AL. As a result, the 'Grand Alliance' joined the election.

It can be argued, in comparison with 2006-2007 situations, there was a political unrest during the time of previous Army Chief General M. A. Mubin since 2010 as well. Comparing with previous regimes, political situation in 2013-14 was worse. During this time, a number of events were occurred. For example, there were incidents of killing happened at Hefazat-e-Islam's political programme on 6 April 2013 and 5 May 2014. Besides, ongoing countrywide demonstrations and street agitation movement had been continued until 29 December 2013. Following UN envoy Oscar Farnandez Taranco's exclusive diplomatic parley at the end of 2013, the government of Bangladesh was asked to stop one party election of 5 January 2014 by the UN. In fact, relevant actors and machinery of concerned country are held responsible to act or react responding political situation.

If actors are not ambitious they do not intervene in politics. It may be mentioned that General M. A. G Osmani did politics but after leaving uniform. Lt. General M Nooruddin Khan and General M. A.Mubin also did not take chances to takeover power.

To make it clear once again, it can be asserted that in 2006-07, I was alone in the government and statecraft against martial law as Moeen time and again wanted to



declare it. When that was interrupted, as substitute, he wanted to declare the State of Emergency in disguise at least three times. He told the President that both the leaders supported him on this, while only Adviser to the President Mokhles Chowdhury was obstructing it.

## **Conclusion**

It has been empirically seen that Army Chief Moeen U. Ahmed used governmental efforts to become the President of Bangladesh. He and his accomplices worked hard to receive support of foreign powers in this regard. However, he was foiled first by me as I did my diplomacy since long. Later he failed following submission of his official proposal to declare a Martial Law to become the President. I worked with the US administration as well as the UN system while staying three months in USA.

Looking back to analyses above, it has been also argued that India was in favour of Moeen for known reasons, but my diplomacy with the USA helped to stop our neighbouring country regarding this.

Whatever we need to do in politics, it is our duty to serve our country. Foreigners should not dictate our jobs. Sometimes, foreigners may have their own agenda. However, foreign power supports us in popular cause. They did not support military takeover in 2007. Ironically, general Moeen blackmailed United Nations on that occasion. UN Resident Coordinator Renata Lok Dessallien was responsible to support that military coup, which helped Moeen and his accomplices much to takeover. That was Moeen's only cover. Unfortunately, in this case Moeen used Bangladesh's participation in UN Peace Keeping Force as weapon. From that occurrence we need to learn lessons. It has been proved by this that the fear of losing participation in the UNPKF was nothing, but a tool to take over power. In conjunction with evidence, it has been proved that Lt. General Moeen's lust to power was the main reason, where other causes were secondary and tertiary. He used and blackmailed all concerned as and when necessary. Although I was alone in the

government in halting martial law, the USA's help was one of the factors, which saved our democracy in 2007.

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