



## CHALLENGES

The post-liberation period in Bangladesh was laden with chaos - as there were obstacles to overcome, complications that needed urgent attention and course of actions that had to be determined immediately. Amid all this, people pinned all their hopes solely on Sheikh Mujib. On his mission to give shape to his lifelong dream braving all odds, he found his path wrought with numerous conspiracies and sabotage attempts.

## Wounds to Heal

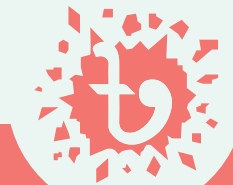
In every layer of the state, wounds of the war were still raw— 3 million people slaughtered and 2 hundred thousand women raped by the Pakistani army, 10 million refugees in India, displacement of 20 million people within the country.

The Pakistani Force destroyed rail lines, bridges, roads, telecommunication system, industries, infrastructures, and production and supply chains, devastating the entire economy. They even destroyed ships and aircrafts, which would have been useful for the newly liberated country. Per capita income in 1970-71 dropped, and was 22% less than that of 1972-73. After the war, only 1,000 trucks among 8,000 were in usable condition. More than 300 rail bridges of different sizes and as many road bridges were demolished. The entrance to Chittagong Port remained blocked with the wreckage of 29 ships. The retreating Pakistani soldiers planted mines in the channel of the port, making it inaccessible.



Pakistani industrialists siphoned off BDT 7.85 million (9.3 million USD) from Bangladesh and the Pakistani army burnt the entire cash and gold reserve in the central bank just before their surrender. Earlier, they took away about 3 million MT of food grains from different warehouses.

1



The cost of damage done to capital assets and properties only in public sector stood at BDT 2.8 billion (USD 33 million), and the resulting loss of income was estimated at BDT 1.2 billion (USD 15 million).

2



The cost of damage in agricultural sector was estimated at BDT 3.4 billion (USD 40.25 million). Traders at the wholesale and retail levels incurred a loss of about BDT 1 billion (USD 12 million), as import came to a halt and distribution system was jeopardized.

3



# Transport

In nine months of the Liberation War the transport system was almost destroyed, and as a result, the post-war economy almost became stagnant. The import and distribution of food items, raw materials used in the industry, agricultural products and essentials came to a halt.



MV "AL-ABBAS" being towed away from Chittagong port (April, 1972).



Soviet Navy ship trawling for mines in the Bay of Bengal after the Liberation War.

## Damages

### 1. Water Transport

BDT 80.05 million (USD 964 thousand)

Inland Water Transport Agency

BDT 13.34 million (USD 160.5 thousand)

Water Transport Agency

BDT 26.34 million (USD 317 thousand)

### 2. Port

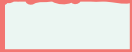
Chittagong

BDT 90.06 Million  
(USD 1.08 million)

Chalna

BDT 58.80 Million  
(USD 707.8 thousand)

### 3. Road



#### Roads in Rural Areas

BDT 18.25 Million (USD 220 thousand)



#### Road Construction Equipment

BDT 17.73 Million (USD 213.4 thousand)

#### Bridges, Culverts and Others

BDT 80.30 Million (USD 967 thousand)

### 4. Road Transport

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation  
BDT 10.80 Million (USD 130 thousand)

#### Retail Instrument

BDT 0.19 Million (USD 23 hundred)

Truck BDT 223.00 Million (USD 26.8 million)

Bus BDT 128.00 Million (USD 15.4 million)

5. Railway BDT 303.00 Million (USD 36.4 million)

### 6. Biman Bangladesh Airlines

BDT 87.15 Million (USD 1.05 million)

7. Civil Aviation BDT 85.44 Million (USD 1.03 million)



A bridge destroyed by the Pakistani army (1971).



A Bangladesh Railway train on broad gauge in the early 70s.

## Allocations and Developments

At this stage the highest priority in the reconstruction program was given to providing all types of facilities in port, developing water transport and dispensing compensations in other cases. Equal importance was given on civil aviation. BDT 1.2 billion (USD 145.5 million) was allocated for this purpose.

A total of



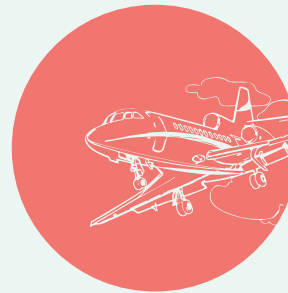
**BDT 91.3 million**  
USD 1.09 million for ports



**BDT 30.3 million**  
USD 363.24 thousand for railways



**BDT 134 million**  
USD 1.6 million for waterways



**BDT 204.1 million**  
USD 2.4 million for civil aviation



**BDT 11.8 million**  
USD 132 thousand for roads and Highways



Significant progress was made in the railway sector within just one year of collective initiative. 43 of 63 mile meter gauge and the entirety of 16 mile broad gauge railway were opened for use.



of the total

295  
railway bridges

82  
permanently

and

198  
temporarily

were rebuilt



Resuming the operation of the Hardinge Bridge with the help of the Indian government in the shortest time was a significant breakthrough.



Bangladesh Railway "Ulka Express" Dhaka - Chittagong on meter gauge in the 70s