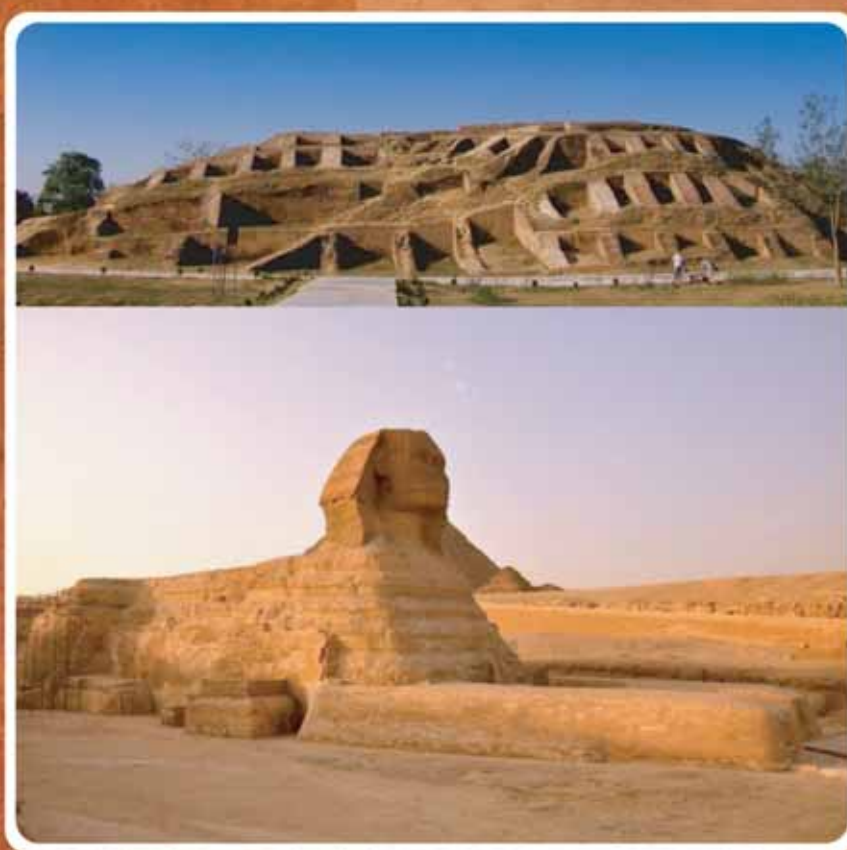


# History of Bangladesh and World Civilization

**Classes 9-10**



**NATIONAL CURRICULUM & TEXTBOOK BOARD, DHAKA**

**Prescribed by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board  
as a Textbook for Class Nine-Ten from the Academic Year-2013**

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# **History of Bangladesh & World Civilization**

## **Class Nine-Ten**

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## Preface

Education is the pre-requisite for the holistic development in our national life. To cope with the challenges of the fast changing world and to lead Bangladesh to the doorstep of development and prosperity, a well educated and skilled population is needed. In order to build up a nation imbued with the spirit of the Language Movement and our Liberation War, the secondary education aims at flourishing the talents and prospects inherent in the learners. Besides, the other aims also include expansion and consolidation of the basic knowledge and skills of the learners acquired at the primary level in order to make them fit for entry into higher education.

The aims of secondary education further emphasise on developing these learners as skilled and competent citizens of the country through the process of acquiring knowledge at the backdrop of socio-economic, cultural and environmental settings.

Keeping the aims and objectives of National Education Policy 2010 ahead, the curriculum at the secondary level has been revised. In the revised curriculum the national aims, objectives and contemporary needs have been reflected. Along with these expected learning outcomes have been determined based on the learner's age, merit and level of acquisition. Besides, efforts have been made to raise, starting from the level of moral and humanistic values down to awareness on history and tradition, the spirit of the Liberation War, passion for art-culture and literature, patriotism, feelings for nature and equal dignity to all irrespective of religions, caste, creed and sex. Efforts have also been made to apply science in all spheres of our life in order to build a nation advanced in science. Attempts are also there to make the learner capable of implementing the goals envisioned in Digital Bangladesh-2021.

In the light of the present curriculum almost all the textbooks at the secondary level have been introduced. While introducing the textbooks, the capacity, aptitude and prior knowledge of the learners have been taken into utmost consideration. While selecting the contexts and their presentation special attention has been given on the expansion of the learner's creative faculty. Adding learning outcomes at the beginning of each chapter, hints about the achievable knowledge of the learners have been given. By adding variety of activities, creative and other questions evaluation has also been made creative.

History is a compulsory subject for Humanities Group of Secondary Education in class Nine-Ten. It is important for every citizen of an independent country to know the history of his nation. The socio-economic, geographical and cultural evolution reflect in history consequently. This text book (**The History of Bangladesh and world civilization**) have been written with special consideration to make a citizen with human qualities, non-communal and spirit of Liberation War. We hope, objectives of the new curriculum and syllabus have been reflected in this text book appropriately.

Considering the challenges and commitments of 21<sup>st</sup> century and following the revised curriculum the textbook has been written. Therefore we welcome with our highest consideration any suggestions, both constructive and rationale as well for the further improvement of the book. Amidst huge activities needed for introducing a textbook, this one has been written within a very short span of time frame. We will continue our effort to make the next edition of this book more beautiful, decent and free from any types of errors.

We appreciate the endeavours of those who assisted very sincerely with their merit and hard work in the process of writing, translating, editing, illustration, introducing sample questions and printing of the book. We hope the book will ensure joyful reading and achievement of expected skills from the learners.

**Prof. Md. Mostafa Kamaluddin**

Chairman

National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Dhaka.

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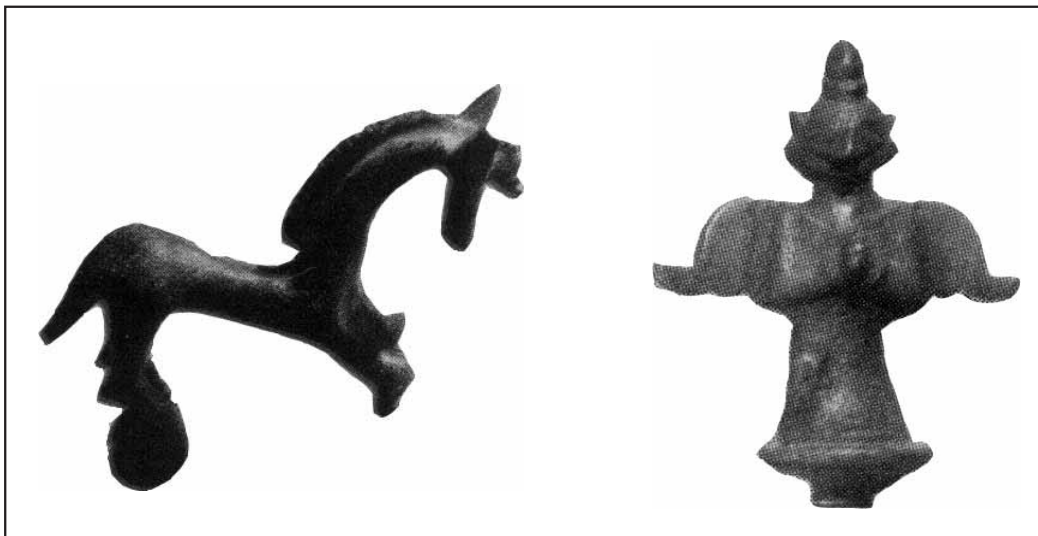
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## Chapter: One

# Introduction to History

The Liberation War of Bangladesh took place in 1971. Our country became free from the enemies on 16 December after a nine-month staunch war against the Pakistani army. The Liberation war is the story of our glory and pride. The Bangalees have such many events of glory. History represents events. It provides sequential and true account of what has been clearly described in it. In order to conduct a comprehensive investigation on history, it is necessary to become informed of the elements and classification of history. In this chapter, we will know how we should study history.

Before that, we need to know what history is? We also need to know how many types of history are there or how to write history. What is the usefulness of studying history? In this present chapter there will be a discussion about these topics.



Picture: ancient historical inscriptions discovered in Wari-Bateshwar

At the end of this chapter we will be able to:

- •□ Explain concepts, nature and scope of history and heritage
- •□ Describe elements and classification of history;
- •□ Discuss the usefulness of studying history;
- •□ Have interest in history and heritage.



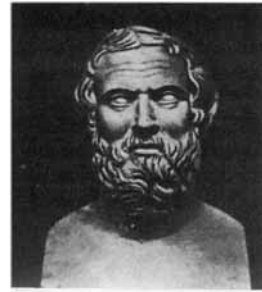
### Concepts of history and heritage

The word 'History' (in Bengali Itihas) comes from the Bengali word 'Itiho' which means heritage. Heritage refers to past habits, education, language, art, literature and culture which are preserved for the future. History conveys this heritage from one generation to another. In the words of E.H. Carr it can be said that history is a constant conversation between the past and the present.

All the issues of the present time are based on past transformation and the past heritage. And History means the factual description of past transformation and heritage. Of course at present, the history of the present time is written which is called contemporary History. So, now the scope of history is stretched from the ancient past to the present time.

If the Bengali word Itihas is divided, then it takes a construction like Itiho + aas which means such was it or such happened. Historian Johnson also called the past event as history. According to him what happens is referred to as history; what does not happen is not history at all. So, it is being seen that the constant flow of events in the society and the state is called history.

The English word History has come from the Greek word Historia whose Bengali synonym is Itihaas. The word Historia was first used by Greek historian Herodotus (fifth century B.C.). He is famous as the father of History. It was he who first of all used this word after the name of his research work whose dictionary meaning is investigation into the truth or research. He believed that history is to investigate or write what in true sense existed or took place. He investigated into different issues of the war that had taken place between Greece and Persia through his research. In this research he gave description of the obtained information, important events and the stories of victory of the Greek so that next generations do not forget these events and these events inspire them and imbue them with patriotism. It was Herodotus who first combined the two concepts. History and Investigation. As a result, History turned into science, became completely information-based and became a subject of research. Actually, never-ending flow of events in human society is called History. Again, Rapson said that History is the sequential and scientific description of events.

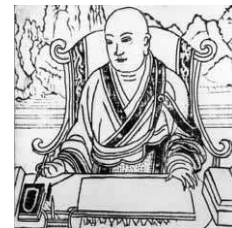


Picture : Herodotus

The father of modern History, the German historian Leopold Von Ranke thinks that History means the research and the true description of what took place. He opines that History is stark true. So, it can be said that History means the sequential and true description of different activities related to the transformation of human society. Therefore, authentic history is written based on the truth.

### Sources of History

The sources of history refer to the information and evidence based on which it is possible to establish the historical truth. The importance of historical sources knows no bounds in writing the actual history. The sources of history can be divided into two groups, such as (a) written sources; and (b) unwritten sources.



Picture : Hiuen- Tsang

- 1. Written Sources:** The written sources of writing history include literature, overseas account, documents etc. There is some information available also in different literary works of the then time. For example: The Vedas, Kautilya's Arthashastra, Kalahan's Rajatarangini, Minhaj-us-Siraj's Tabakat-E-Nasiri, Abul Fazal's Ain-E- Akbari etc.

Descriptions of the overseas travelers are always considered the most important sources. For example: The descriptions of the Chinese travelers Fa-hien, Hiuen- Tsang, and Itsing respectively who came to Bengal from fifth to seventh century. In the subsequent times, there was description about this area/ zone in the writings of others including Ibn Batuta. Quite much information was obtained from these descriptions about the then society, economy, politics, religion, and rituals and customs.

Literary sources also include fairy tales, hearsays, stories etc. The description of Tibetan writer Lama Taranath about the ascending of Gopal, the founder of Pal Dynasty, to the throne is a kind of fantasy. Yet, there remain many true events behind many historical events which the historians discover through meticulous analysis and investigation. Moreover, it is also possible to collect reliable information from government documents, letters etc.



Sources of History

**2. Unwritten or archeological Sources:** Unwritten or archeological evidences refer to those things or sources from which we can get a variety of historical information about a particular time, place or person. Archeological testimonies are included in unwritten elements. For example: coins, stone inscriptions, column inscriptions, copper inscriptions, edifices etc. We can have some knowledge about political, social and economic condition of the people of that time by dint of scientific experiments and analysis of these archeological evidences. It is possible to form an idea about civilization, religion, life-style, urbanization, things used every day, condition of trade and business, agricultural equipments of the ancient people. For example, we can describe the archeological testimonies of the Indus civilization, and some places of Bangladesh such as Mohasthangar, Paharpur, Maynamati etc. New archeological discoveries can change the history of a nation. For instance: the recent archeological discovery of Wari-Bateshwar in Narsingdi. It has been proved in the archeological testimony of that place that even before two thousand five hundred years back there was the existence of urban civilization in Bangladesh. As a result of this discovery, a new horizon of the civilization of ancient Bengal is going to be exposed and people's conceptions about the ancient civilization of Bengal are getting changed day by day. The time is not too far when the ancient history of Bengal will have to be written afresh.



Picture: Discovered the elements of Wari-Bateshwar

**Individual Work :** Make a list on different sources of history



### **Classification of History**

With the advancement of human society and civilization, people have been writing history of new more subjects. As a result, the scope of History is expanding. History is incessantly communicating the past events to the present generation. In that case it is difficult to classify History in different branches. In addition, people, their society, their civilization and their life-style - all these things lie close to each other in the subject-matter of History.

Yet, for the advantage of study, discussion and research work History can be divided into two groups - Geographical and Thematic.

**One:** Geographical Aspect or Geographical History: That is to say in which context the subject which has been included in history has been written - local, national or international. History can again be divided into three groups for the advantage of understanding from the perspective of geographical situation, such as Local/ Zonal History; National History; and International History.

**Two:** Thematic History: Thematic History refers to the history which is written based on a particular subject. The thematic scope of History is wide-ranging. Yet, it can be generally divided into five parts, such as Political History; Social History; Economic History; Cultural History; and Diplomatic and Current/ Contemporary History.

### **Theme of History**

History is the evidence and written document of chronological changes of people, their society and their civilization. Of modern historians Vico thinks about the theme of History in the way that human society and the origin and the growth of humanitarian institutions are the theme of history.

Therefore, it is seen that all the important achievements that have been able to contribute to the development and progress of human society and civilization are all subjects included in History. Such as: art, literature and culture, philosophy, sculpture, politics, warfare, religion, laws etc. which as a whole have influenced directly or indirectly society and civilization are all focus of History.

### **Nature of History**

History is different from other subjects. Its formation and presentation methodology are also different from other branches of knowledge. Our conception will be clear if we discuss features and nature of History.

**First:** History tends to the past. This subject deals with the flow of events of the past. It is the trait of History which is to reconstruct the past through authentic information.

**Second:** The theme of History is man, his society and his civilization. The focus of History is the sequential description of chronological progress of human society and civilization. This information must be based on authentic sources.

**Third:** There is no place of emotion and exaggeration in History. The characteristic of History is to uphold to the next generation a perfect account of events that had taken place.

**Fourth:** History never stops; it is ever-flowing for which it is difficult to use years and dates in dividing time. Again, the trends of changes did not take place in all countries at the same time.

**Fifth:** Factuality and neutrality are the characteristics of History. But, observation skill and outlook vary from person to person. For this reason, the description / narration of the same event varies from historian to historian. If the presentation of the narration of an event is not neutral, it cannot be deserved History.

<b>Individual Work :</b>
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### **Scope of History**

All activities performed by man are included in the scope of History. The periphery of history extends to those branches where man's thinking, planning, activities are extended. But the limit of this extension is not static. The scope of History is being modified with the changes in man's thinking and activities. For example: During the first phase of prehistoric period, man's activities were limited to collecting foods. Production strategy was still unknown to them. As a result, at that time the scope of History was extended to the activities of food collection. The periphery of man's activities has increased with evolution of time and the progress of civilization. Along with this, scientific methods are being adopted in research and inculcation of History. As a result, the number of the branches of History has increased, and its limit is also expanding. In the nineteenth century though History was a subject of politics, after the preaching of Marxism History of Economics, History of Society, History of Fine Arts started being written. Thus one after another new subjects are being included in History and its scope is expanding.

### **Usefulness of Studying History**

History is an account based on the truth of the evolution of human society and civilization for which the importance of History is limitless as a branch of knowledge. The study of History helps us understand the present and the future in the perspective of the past. As a result of the study of History it is possible to get the prediction of misfortune and wellbeing that are about to occur to us and in our country. Therefore, the study of History is very much essential for the interest of the country and the nation, and also for personal need.

**Increases our knowledge and self-dignity:** The factual account of the past helps to increase the periphery of knowledge of human beings. And, if this account is about one's own country, about all struggles and wars of the nation, about glorious heritage, then it can imbue the nation with patriotism. At the same time, it helps to become self-determined and self-confident. In that case, the study of History does not have any alternative to steady/ strengthening nationalism and national solidarity.

**Increases awareness:** Knowledge of History raises awareness among people. Man can understand difference between the good and the bad if he can know the causes of ups and downs of different human communities and the causes of the development and downfall of civilization. As a result he remains conscious of the consequences of his activities.

**Educates through examples:**

The practical importance of History is unlimited. Man can learn lessons from the instances of past events by studying History. The lessons learnt from History can be applied in the present need. History teaching through examples is called Educative Philosophy.

The knowledge that is acquired by studying History is the best lesson for our practical life.

The study of History enhances the capacity of our judgment and analysis which helps to form philosophical outlook. Consequently, there grows an interest in acquiring and inculcating knowledge.

**Group Work:** Identify historical sources of your locality or by visiting nearby historical places / evidences.

## Questions for practice

**Multiple Choice Questions:**

1. Who is called the father of Modern History?
  - a. Herodotus
  - b. Leopold Von Ranke
  - c. Toynbee
  - d. E. H. Karr
2. The archeological inscriptions obtained in Wari-Bateswar proves that -
  - i. Bangladesh was rich in pottery from ancient time.
  - ii. Urban civilization grew up in Bangladesh during very ancient time.
  - iii. Thoughts and ideas of the people of the ancient Bengal were very developed.

Which one of the followings is correct?

- a. i
- b. i and ii
- c. ii and iii
- d. i, ii and iii

**Read the stimulant and answer questions 3 and 4:**

Rima went to Comilla with her parents to visit Maynamati Museum during Eid vacation. There she could see coins, stone inscriptions, column inscriptions, copper inscriptions, edifices etc.

3. The sources of history that Rima found in Maynamati museum were
- written
  - Unwritten
  - Archeological

Which one of the followings is correct?

- i and ii
  - i and iii
  - ii and iii
  - i, ii, and iii
4. Rima may have learnt after visiting Maynamati museum about
- Social History
  - Economic History
  - Cultural History

Which one of the followings is correct?

- i and ii
- ii and iii
- i and iii
- i, ii, and iii

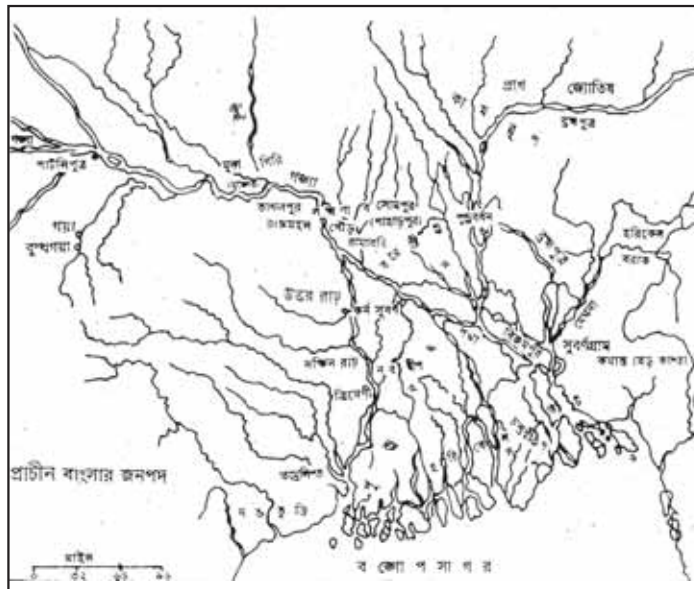
**Creative Questions:**

- Sajal goes to the National Library with his maternal uncle. He reads different types of books there. Despite being a student of science, he likes history books. He collects history books from different sources. Sajal's father rebuffed and told him, 'Why are you killing time by reading such books?'
- Of which country was Hiuen- Sang a traveler?
  - How is the periphery of history expanding with the evolution of time?
  - What kind of sources of history did Sajal find in the National Library? Explain.
  - Do you agree to the attitude/ frame of mind of Sajal's father?

## Chapter: Two

The periodisation is very important in the discussion related to history. This periodisation is determined by the effectiveness of the origin, growth, and influence of socio, economic and political characteristics. Generally, in history the time beginning before several centuries B.C. till the time of the fifth century is called the Ancient Age. But variations in periodisation are noticed in different places. The period of nearly long two thousand years till the beginning of the thirteenth century is considered as the ancient age of Bengal.

In ancient age Bengal (now Bangladesh and West Bengal) was not a unique or inseparated state like present Bangladesh. Different parts of Bengal were divided in many small regions. The ruler of every region ruled their regions according to their own way. These regions of Bengal were collectively named Janapada.



Map: Janapadas of ancient Bengal

**At the end of this chapter we will be able to:**

- Identify the present position of the Janapadas of ancient Bengal in the map of Bangladesh and describe them;
- Explain the importance of the Janapadas in investigating information of ancient Bengal;
- Become interested to know the importance of the Janapadas in acquiring knowledge about the history of ancient Bengal.

## Janapads

From the century the names of the Janapada of ancient Bengal were obtained from stone inscriptions and literary works of the Gupta period, post Gupta period, Pala, Sena etc regime. It is not possible to say how much area these Janapadas covered. We can get an idea about their positions from the historical sources of the ancient age. Some Janapads are described below:

**Gaur:** Though the name Gaur seems familiar, there are many differences of opinions about which area was referred to as Gaur in the ancient time. Again it was also unknown why Gaur was first referred to in the book of Panini. In Kautilya's 'Arthashastra' there are references of many industrial and agricultural products of the country Gaur. In the book of Vatsyana there are also references of the luxurious life of the inhabitants of Gaur in the third and the fourth century. It is proved from the stone inscriptions of the time of Harshavardhana that the country of Gaur was not so far from the coast. From the description written by Varaha Mihira in the sixth century it is seen that Gaur was different from other Janapads such as Pundra, Bengal, Samatata. In Vabishoy Purana it has been described as a region lying on the south of the Padma and on the north of Burdwan. There is much similarity between this comment and the descriptions of the people of the seventh century. In the seventh century the capital of Sasanka, the king of Gaur was Karnasubarna near Murshidabad. Not only Sasanka, in the later periods Gaur was the capital of many other kings.

During Pala dynasty Gaur had the most name and fame. Then the vast region of north India was included in Gaur. Being a center of the empire, it had irresistible power and strength. In the later periods the destiny of Gaur started to change with the change of the destiny of the Pala empire. Then the border of Gaur diminished. Some regions of present Maldah, Murshidabad, Birbhum and Bardwan were considered the border of Gaur. In the seventh century the capital of the king Sasanka of Gaur was Karnasubarno in the region of Murshidabad. The Lakhnauti in the region of Maldaha was called Gour at the beginning of the Muslim period. Later, Gaur was meant as the whole of Bengal.

**Banga:** Bengal was a very ancient Janapada. In the very ancient puthi (fairy tale) it was called neighbor of Janapadas Magadha and Kalinga. It is understandable from the references in Mahabharata that Bengal was a neighboring country of Pundra, Tamralipta and Summa. Descriptions about this Janapada are available in the stone inscriptions of Chandragupta, Vikramaditya, king of Chalukya, Rashtrakuta and in the books of Kalidas. A Janapada named Banga was built to the east and the south-east of present Bangladesh. It is surmised that a nation named Banga lived here. So, the Janapada was familiar as Banga. From the evidence of different sources, it is thought that the area situated between the Ganges and the Bhagirathi was called Banga.

The area of Banga shrank during the Pala and the Sena dynasty. In the eleventh century at the last phase of the Pala dynasty, Banga was divided in two parts and they became known as North Banga and South Banga respectively. The Padma was the north border of the northern region and the delta region of the South was the South Banga. In the later periods during the regime of Keshoba Sena and Vishwarup Sena also two parts of Banga were noticed. But now their names were different - one was Vikrampur and the other was Navya. From the old stone inscription, we learn about two parts of Banga. One of them is Vikrampur and the other is Navya. The then Vikrampur comprised of present



Vikrompura and some parts of Idilpur Pargana. There is no existence of any place called Navya at present. It is thought that lower marshy places of Faridpur, Barisal, and Patuakhali are included in this Navya region. Banga consisted of greater Bogra, Pabna and western region of Mymensingh, Dhaka, Faridpur, Kushtia, greater Comilla and some parts of Noakhali. The nation 'Bangalee' was originated from 'Banga'.

**Pundra:** Pundra was one of the most important Janapads of ancient Bengal. It is said that a nation called Pundra built up this Janapada. There are references of this nation in the Vedic literature and in the Mahabharata. Pundranagar was the name of the capital of the Pundras. In later periods, it became known as Mahasthangar. Probably during the reign of the Maurya emperor Ashoka (273-232B.C) ancient Pundra kingdom lost its independent entity. This Pundra kingdom became Pundravardhana with the growth of its prosperity in the fifth - sixth century. Pundravardhana of that time was extended at least across the regions of Bogra, Dinajpur and Rajshahi. Probably the fairly whole north Bengal beginning from Rajmohal-Ganges- Bhagirathi to Korotoa was included in Pundrabardhana during that time. During the Sena reign the most south border of Pundravardhana was extended through the Padma completely to Khari Bishoy (at present Khari Pargana of Chobbish Parganas) and to the seashore of Dhaka and Barisal. The experts infer that Mahasthangar, seven miles away from Bogra is the ruins of ancient Pundravardhana.



Picture: Mahasthangar Bogra

It was Pundra which was the most prosperous Janapada of the ancient Bengal from the perspective of evidences of ancient civilization. Probably the most ancient stone inscription inscribed on stone wheel obtained in Bangladesh have been discovered here.

**Harikela:** The writers of the 7th century have also described another region called Harikela. Chinese traveler Itsing said that Harikela was situated at the end of eastern India. But we can trace parts of present Chittagong in the description of Harikela in the write ups by others. In the analyses of all these data, it can be assumed that Harikela spread from Srihatta (Sylhet) in the east to some portions of Chittagong. Although in the middle was another kingdom named Samatata which can create a little confusion. In fact, loose administration used to prevail in places in the region at that time. Besides, despite Banga, Samatata and Harikela being separate kingdom, sometimes and in some places their identity presumably used to overlap due to their close proximity of borders. Factually, Harikela existed as a separate state from 7th to 8th century to 10th to 11th century A.D. But Harikela was assumed to be a part of Banga since the occupation of Chandradwip by King Trilokyachandra, the descendant of Chandra dynasty in eastern Bengal. Some others are there who assume Sylhet and Harikela to be the same.

**Samatata:** Samatata was situated in the east and south-east Bengal as a neighboring Janapada of Banga. This region was a humid low lying land. Some think that Samatata was the ancient name of present Comilla. Again, some other think that Samatata comprised of Comilla and Noakhali region. Present Tripura region was one of the parts of Samatata from the seventh century till the twelfth century. Once upon a time the western border of this Janapada was extended to the Khari Pargana of Chobbish Parganas. The coastal region extending from the eastern shore of Ganges-Bhagirathi to the tributary of the Meghna was probably called Samatata. In the seventh century its capital was the place named Bara Kamta, 12 miles west of Comilla city.

**Barendra:** Another Janapada of ancient Bengal could be known in the name of Varendree, Barendra, or Barendra Bhumi. It was also a Janapada of north Bengal. Barendra was the most important region of Pundravardhana Janapada. Pundravardhana, the main city of the Janapada and the center of the provincial ruler during the Gupta regime, was also in this Barendra region. So, it cannot be called a Janapada. But once upon a time this region used to be introduced by this name. So, in the history of ancient Bengal it was given the dignity of a Janapada. It can undoubtedly be said that this Janapada was situated in region between the Ganges and the Karatoa. The Barendra region was extended across a vast area of Bogra, Dinajpur, and Rajshahi region as well as probably Pabna region.

**Tamralipta:** Tamralipta Janapada was situated to the north of Harikela. Tomluk in the region of present Medenipur was the heart of Tamralipta. This coastal area was very humid and low lying. This place was the best for navigational Janapada. In the ancient time Tamralipta was known to be an important center for river trade. This port stood on the river Rupnarayana, 12 miles away from the juncture of two rivers --- the Hoogly and the Rupnarayana. It started to be known as Dandobhukti since the seventh century. The prosperity of Tamralipta port was damaged just after the eighth century.

**Chandradeep:** Besides Janapadas mentioned above, there was another tinier Janapada in ancient Bengal. This was Chandradeep. The very Barisal region of today was the mainland and the heart of Chandradeep. This ancient Janapada was situated in the place between the Baleshwar and the Meghna.

Besides, in greater ancient Bengal there were some other Janapadas named Dandobhukti, North Rahr (the western part of present Murshidabad region, whole Birbhum region and Katoa Sub-division of the Budwan region), South Rahr (the southern part of present Budwan, many parts of Hoogly and Howrah region), Bangla (generally Sundarban forests of Khulna, Patuakhali and Barisal) etc. Thus different parts of ancient Bengal were known by different names from the ancient time till the sixth-seventh century. Basically, it was an economic and geographical division. At the start of the seventh century Sasanka after becoming the king of Gaur organized the total area from Murshidabad to Utkol (North orissa). After that Bengal used to be known by the name of three Janapada.

These were Pundravardhana, Banga and Gaur. The existence of the left others were lost in them. Attempts to unite the divided Janapadas reached much of completeness during the regimes of the Pala and the Sena Kings. Though Sasanka and Pala kings were the kings of the whole of West Bengal, they familiarized themselves as 'King of Rahr' or 'King of Gaur'. As a result, the name 'Gaur' gained familiarity.

We can get a fair conception of geographical shape, demarcation, political characteristics of the then Bengal from the Janapadas of ancient Bengal. Then there was no political unity in ancient Bengal. The powerful rulers would gain ruling power of more than one Janapada through executing their domination. Thus these Janapadas played roles as the first territorial unit or administrative unit in ancient Bengal and later helped form political unity.

## Exercise for practice

### Multiple Choice Questions:

1. From which Janapada did the nation Bangla originate?
  - a. Barendra
  - b. Pundra
  - c. Banga
  - d. Gaur
2. The Tamralipti Janapada was-
  - i. a coastal area very humid and low-lying
  - ii. known to be the centre for land trade
  - iii. the best for navigation

Which one of the following answers is correct?

- a. i and ii
- b. i and iii
- c. ii and iii
- d. i, ii and iii.

### Read the stimulant and answer question 3-4:

Shila with her parents went to visit Barendra Museum of Rajshahi during winter vacation. After going there she got familiar with ancient inscriptions. Among these there was particularly an inscription on the wheel of stone. She came to know that it was an ancient stone inscription found in Bangladesh and this inscription was made during the reign of emperor Ashoka.

3. Which Janapada do the inscription Shila was familiar with imply?
  - a. Gaur
  - b. Pundra
  - c. Samatata
  - d. Barendra
4. The above-mentioned Janapada was an important one in ancient Bengal. Because it-
  - i. was the most ancient of the civilization
  - ii. is known to be an prosperous city
  - iii. was a famous center for river- trade

Which one of the following answers is correct?

- a. i
- b. i and ii
- c. i and iii
- d. i, ii and iii

**Creative Questions:**

1.



Picture: Shalban Vihara

- a. Which was the capital of Sasanka the king of Gaur?
- b. What do you understand by Janapada?
- c. In which Janapada of the past was the inscription referred to in the above-mentioned stimulant situated?
- d. Do you think the said Janapada was the most developed of ancient Bengal?

## **Chapter: Three**

### **Political History of Ancient Bengal (326 B.C. -1204 A.D.)**

We can get an idea about chronological history of Bengal since the Pala rule. It is not easy to find out the history before that. During this period no ruler could reign for a long time all over Bengal. So, the political life of Bengal evolved disconnectedly. There was an unstable situation after the end of Maurya and Gupta rule. Some independent kingdom roses through this instability. King Sasanka of North Bengal was the most powerful among those independent kingdoms. After his death there was no competent ruler in Bengal for a long time. As a result, there appeared anarchy and disorder all over the kingdom. Nearly one hundred years passed all the way through this condition. Afterwards a leader named Gopala brought this unstable condition to an end and established the Pala dynasty. In the middle of the twelfth century the Pala dynasty encountered its downfall. During that Pala regime small independent kingdoms came into being in south-east Bengal. After that the Senas coming from Karnataka of South India established a kingdom in East Bengal. The Sena regin continued for about two hundred years. In the first decade of the thirteenth century the Sena reign yielded to Muslim power. Then a new chapter started - the Middle Age of Bengal.

**At the end of this chapter we will be able to -**

- Give an account of the important dynasties of ancient Bengal and their regimes;
- Explain the political condition of Bengal prior to the Pala age ;
- Hold a positive idea about the contribution of the then important dynasties to political practices of ancient Bengal;
- Know chronological political history of ancient Bengal by getting to know about important dynasties;
- Give an account of the kingdoms of South-east Bengal;
- Be informed about the administrative system of ancient Bengal.

#### **Important dynasties of ancient Bengal and administrative system**

##### **Bengal during the Age of Maurya and Gupta**

There were no sources available to write any chronological history of ancient Bengal prior to the age of Gupta because people of that time were not used to writing history like those of today. We get a few sources of history from sporadic and separated comments in Indian and foreign literatures about Bengal of that time. It is not possible to write any chronological history attached with dates, years and authentic events by unjustly joining these unconnected events. In fact, in 327 B.C. -26 A.D. during the invasion of India by Greek hero Alexander, history took its original form. In the writings of Greek writers there was a powerful kingdom named 'Gongariddi' in Bengal. The nation 'Gongaridi' inhabited in the region between the two streams of the Ganges now known as the Bhagirathi and the Padma. The Greek writers referred to another nation called 'Prasioy' in addition to 'Gongaridi'. Their capital was Palibothra (Patliputra). It can be guessed depending on the descriptions of the Greek writers that these two nations took their arms against Alexander under the leadership of the same dynasty. It can also

be guessed that during Alexander's invasion the king of Bengal extended his kingdom upto Punjab. He was someone king belonging the conquering Magadha and surrounding kingdom to Nanda Dynasty of Patliputra. It is beyond doubt from comments of ancient Greek writers that the king of Bengal was the most powerful at that time.

Just after two years of the departure of Alexander from India in 321 B.C. Maurya king Chandra gupta Maurya established the lordship of Maurya Dynasty on a vast region of India. During the reign of Emperor Ashoka (269B.C.-232 B.C.) the Maurya rule was established in North Bengal. The region turned to a province of the Mauryans. Ancient Pundranagar was the capital of this province. Besides, north Bengal, Maurya rule was established in Karnasubarno (Murshidabad), Tamralipta (Hoogly) and Samatata (South-east Bengal).

After the fall of Maurya Empire, Shunga dynasty and later Kanva dynasty appeared. We do not have enough sources to know the history of this age. It is thought that they established their rule on some small regions. After that quite a good number of foreign powers invaded India. Among them Greek, 'Saka' 'Pahlav', 'Kushana' are mentionable. But it cannot be said whether these inbedors came upto Bengal.

Quite a number of sources are available to historians to know about the Gupta Age. It has been easy to write the history of the last half of the Third century and the first phase of the 4th century from these sources. Gupta Empire was established in India in 320 A.D. Then some independent kingdoms came into being in Bengal. Among them Samatata of South-east Bengal and Puskoron of West Bengal are mentionable. Some sections of the North Bengal came under the possession of Gupta Empire just during the reign of Gupta Emperor Chandragupta. Though whole Bengal was conquered during the reign of Samudragupta, Samatata was a vana kingdom. Since the reign of Samudragupta up to the middle of the sixth century North Bengal was used to be considered as a 'Province' or 'Bhukti' of Gupta Empire. Like the Mauryas, Pundrangar of Mohasthangar was the capital of the Gupta kings of the province.

### **Bengal in Post Gupta Period**

As a result of the attack by The daring mountainous tribe the Huns in the fifth century and by Joshovarman of Malaba in the sixth century, Gupta rule completely came to an end at the very first half of the sixth century. After the fall of great Gupta Empire, there was the emergence of small independent kingdoms in North India. Thus after the fall of the Gupta empire political instability grew all over north India. With that chance two independent kingdoms came into being. Either of them was Banga. It was situated in the Southern region of South-east Bengal and West Bengal. The second kingdom was Gaur. Its location was in the western and northern regions of Bengal.

**Individual work :** Write down the background of Banga and Gour Janapadas in the history of Bengal

### **The independent Kingdom of Banga**

An independent kingdom emerged in the Banga Janapada with the advantage of the weaknesses of the Gupta's Empire. It was known from 'Copper inscription' on copper that three kings named Gochandra, Dharmaditya and Samachardeva ruled independent Bengal. All of them assumed the title 'Moharajadhiraj'. Their regime was between 525A.D. -600 A.D. It cannot be said when and how the independent and powerful Bongo kingdom collapsed. It is a notion that Kirtivarman the king belonging to Chalukya dynasty brought about the downfall of



independent Banga kingdom. Those who do not hold dissimilar opinion say that due to the rise of independent Gaur kingdom, the Bongo kingdom collapsed. The rise of some feudal kings is also held responsible for the fall of independent Bengal because before the seventh century independent and feudal kings belonging to Bhadra, Kharga, Rahr dynasty rose in the kingdom Samatata of south Bengal.

### **The independent Kingdom of Gour**

After the fall of the Gupta dynasty in the sixth century the kings known as the 'later Gupta dynasty' with the title 'Gupta' extended their domination in North Bengal, northern side of West Bengal and Magadha. In the middle of the sixth century Gaur became known as a Janapada in this very region. As a result of fifty years of generational fight among the Maukharis and the subsequent Gupta kings, constant attack of Tibetans from the north and Chalukyans from the Deccan, the kings belonging to Gupta dynasty of Bengal became weak. Taking the complete advantage of this condition, a some feudal king named Sasanko grabbed the power of Gaur region and established Gaur kingdom at the beginning of the seventh century.

**Sasanka:** The identity, his rise and the account of life of Sasanka are not clear to the scholars yet, because the testimonies that have been available provide nearly opposite descriptions. A ruler of a large region under the Gupta kings was called 'Mohasamonto'. It is thought that Sasanka was a 'Mahasamanta' of Gupta king Mahasenagupta and his son or nephew.

Sasanka ascended to the throne before 606 A.D. His capital was Karnasubarna. After strengthening his possession in Gaur he started to extend his kingdom to neighboring regions. He enlarged his border by conquering Dondobhukti (Medinipur), Utkal of Orissa (north Orissa) and Kongod (South Orissa), Mogodh of Bihar. His kingdom was extended to Varanasi to the west. The king Kamrupa (Assam) was also defeated by him. Then he paid attention to the west border of the kingdom. At that time there were two powerful kings in North India. One was Thaneswar belonging to Pushyabhuti Dynasty and the other was Kanyakubza belonging to the Maukhari dynasty. Maukhari power was trying again and again to occupy Bangla from west. Despite at the contempoRahry time with nuptial bondage of Rajjyoshree, the daughter of Probhakarbardhana, the king of Thaneshwar with Grahabarman the Maukhari king of Kanauj, there emerged an alliance between Kanauj and Thenshawar. As a result of this alliance, the security of Bengal was at stake. As a counter step Sasanka also enhanced his power by making friendship with Devagupta, the king of Malava in diplomatic ways.

Just after the sudden demise of attacked Prabhakarvardhana the king of Thaneshwar, his son-in-law Grahavarmana ascended to the throne of Kanauj. Devagupta the king of Malaba defeated Grahavarmana the king of Maukhari. His wife Rajjyoshree became a captive. Then Devagupta started to march towards Thaneshwar. After that Rajjyovardwana became the king of Thaneshwar. On the way Devagupta was defeated and killed by Rajjyovardwana. But he had been killed by Sasanka before he exercised his lordship over Kanauj and rescued his sister Rajjyoshree.

After the of Rajjyovardwana died, Harshavardhana ascended to the throne of Kanauj and Thaneshwara. Without any delay, he started a military expedition against Sasanka to rescue Rajjyoshree and to take revenge on him. At that time Vhaskarvarma of Kamrupa came in alliance with him. But it is not perfectly known about the result of fight or whether there was any fight between them. Sasanka died some time before 637 A.D.

Sasanka was a follower of Shaiba religion. Hiuen-Tsang called him spiteful of Buddhism. But there has not been any strong evidence about the matter till today. Sasanka is a particularized name in the seventh century in the history of Bengal. It was he who was the first important sovereign ruler in the history of ancient Bengal.

**Work :** Prepare a chart

### **Matsyanayam and the Pala Dynasty (750A.D.-1161 A.D.)**

There came a dark and disastrous age in the history of Bengal after the death of Sasanka. Bengal remained without any competent ruler for a long time. As a result, there was anarchy and disorder in the kingdom. In one hand Harshavardwan and Bhaskarvarmana lacerated Gaur; on the other hand, every landlord was locked in clash with one another in imagination of becoming the king of Bengal. There was no one to take care of the central power with an iron hand. This period of anarchy has been called Matsyanayam in Pala 'copper inscriptions'. Matsyanayam refers to a condition of anarchy and disorder like when the big fishes catch and swallow the small fishes in a pond. The powerful kings of Bengal took complete control over small regions in such a way. This period of anarchy lasted for one hundred years. In the middle of the eighth century this anarchy and disorder came to an end with the rise of the Pala reign.

The mind of the people of Bengal was embittered with long standing anarchy and disorder. In order to get rid of such extreme sufferings, the senior leaders of the country made up their mind that forgetting all strife and conflict they would elect one for the position of king and all of them would accept his lordship. The people of the country also accepted this proposal happily. As a result, a man named Gopala was elected for the position of king. During the reign of the subsequent ruler Dharmapala, this selection story of Gopala was derived from the copper inscriptions of Khalimpur. Lama Tarnath, a historian of Tibet of course introduced a fairy-tale about Gopala's succession to throne. The summary of his story is: The sufferings of the people of the country knew no bounds because of long standing anarchy and disorder. The top level leaders of the country became unanimous and selected a king to establish the rule of law. But one night the selected king was killed by an ugly Naga female demon. After that every night one after another selected king started being killed. Quite a number of years passed this way. At length, one day a devotee of goddess Chunda came to a house. He saw that every one of the house was very sad because that day one of the boys of that house was entitled to be the selected king. The stranger agreed to become the king instead of that boy. He was selected the king the next morning. When the Naga female demon came that night, he killed the demon striking with the stick blessed by goddess Chunda. The next day every body was surprised to see him alive. He was selected the king for seven consecutive days. At last, people of the country selected him king permanently for his eccentric fitness.

Nothing special can be known about the earlier life of Gopala. Nothing clear is also known about the identity of Pala dynasty and their original abode. The father's name of Gopala was Byppot. He was a 'destroyer of enemy'. His grandfather was Doitovishnu. No royal title was seen before their names. So, it is thought that they were ordinary persons. Doitovishnu was 'pure of all knowledge'. It appears from this perspective that Gopala was known as a skilled warrior like his father. The Pala reign began in Bengal with Gopala's ascending to the throne. The kings of Pala dynasty ruled this country for 400 years at a stretch. No other dynasty ruled

this country so long as Pala Dynasty. Ascending to the throne, Gopala paid attention to extend his kingdom. He brought nearly the whole region of north and east Bengal under his rule. South-east Bengal remained beyond the rule of Gopala. Many opine that Gopala reigned for 27 years. But the modern researchers think that he ruled the country from 756A.D. till 781 A.D.

**Individual work : What does matsynayam means ?**

After the death of Gopala Dharmapala (781A.D. -821A.D.) ascended to the throne of Bengal. He was the most famous of all Palaakings. His rule was established throughout Bengal and Bihar. At that time a competition was going on among three dynasties on exercising domination in North India. One was the Pala dynasty of Bengal, the other was Gurjarpratihara of Rajputana, and the third one was Rashtrakutas of the Deccan. In history this fight is known as 'the Tripartite struggle'. This fight started at the end of the eighth century. The first fight took place between Dharmapala and Vatsaraja belonging to Protihara dynasty. Dharmapala was defeated in this fight. Yet, Dharmapala conquered quite a number of regions beyond Bengal. He extended his kingdom to the region between the Ganges and the Jamuna, conquering Varanasi and Proyaga. Though Dharmapala was defeated at the start of the tripartite struggle, he did not suffer much harm because after the conquest, Rastrokutiraja returned to the Deccan. Taking this advantage, Dharmapala occupied Kanauj. But within a short period of time the king of Protihara Nagvhatta the ii occupied Kanauj. As a result, there was fight between him and Dharmapala. At this time also Dharmapala did not suffer any loss. Because as before the king of Rastrokutaraja Govinda the iii came to north India and defeated Nagvhatta the ii. After the defeat of the king of Pratihara, Dharmapala also surrendered to Govindha the iii. After that when the king of Rastrokut returned to his country, Dharmapala again got the opportunity of extending his domination. Some think that Dharmapala conquered Nepal. Dharmapala reigned nearly 40 years (781A.D.-821 A.D.).

Like his father Dharmapala was a Buddhist. Among the Pala kings he assumed the highest sovereign title 'Parameswara, Paramavattaraka Maharajadhiraja'. He built a Buddhist monastery 24 miles east of Bhagalpur. As his second name or title Vikromshil, it was famous by the name 'Vikromshil Vihara'. Like Nalanda Vikromshil Vihara also gained name and fame throughout India and beyond India. It was known as a famous Buddhist learning center throughout all India from the ninth century to the twelfth century. Many Buddhist monk of Tibet used to come here to study and many famous Buddhist scholars preached Buddhism in Tibet. Dharmapala built an enormous Vihara at Paharpur in the district of Natore also. It is known as 'Somapura Vihara'. This architectural work has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. No other stupendous Vihara like it has yet been discovered anywhere in India. He probably built a Vihara in Udantapura (Bihara). According to Tarnath, Dharmapala built 50 study centers for the learning of Buddhism.

As a king, one of the characteristics of the Pala age is to equally patronize the subjects of all religions. For that reason, though he was as Buddhist, Dharmapala did not feel any aversion to other religions. He believed that there is no relation between individual religion of the king and



Picture: Somapura Vihara, Paharpur, Naogaon

the running of the kingdom. So, he would abide by the obligations of the scriptures and he would take care so that people of every religion could practice their respective religions. He gave a land free from tax to build a Hindu temple of Narayana. Most of those whom he gave land were the Brahmins. The Prime Minister of Dharmapala Garga was a Brahmin. His generations were employed to the position of Prime Minister of the Pala kings for ages.

Dharmapala was one of the most famous rulers in the history of ancient Bengal. The country which was once a sweet abode of anarchy and oppression suddenly became extremely powerful under his leadership and was able to establish his lordship in northern India.

**Individual work :** Dharmapala was one of the most famous rulers. Mention three characteristic in favor of him.

After the death of Dharmapala, his son Devapala (821A.D.-861 A.D.) ascended to the throne. He was an able posterior of his father. Like his father he was able to expand the kingdom. Devapala directed successful military expeditions against the kings of Pratihara and the Rastrakuta in northern India. He occupied a large region of northern India. He was also able to exercise his domination on Orisa and Kamrup. After all, it was his time when the Pala kingdom expanded the most.



Map : Pala Dynasty

Devapala was a great patron of Buddhism. It was he who repaired the Buddhist monasteries of Magadha. He built a monastery in Nalanda and an enormous temple in Buddhagaya. He established a new capital in Munger. He permitted Balputradeva, the great king belonging to Shailendra dynasty of Java, Sumatra and Malay to build a monastery in Nalanda. In addition to that, five villages were also given to bear the expenses of this monastery. From this event, we can get the proof of intimate relationship with Bengal and a group of island of South-east Asia.

Devapala was very respectful of learning and the learned. Buddhist scholars of different countries adorned his royal courtyard. Under the patronization of Devapala Nalanda University then became the main center of Buddhist culture in whole Asia. He employed to the post of Chancellor of Nalanda University Indragupta, a Brahmin expert in Buddhist scriptures. Buddhism was active again in northern India centering round this Nalanda University during his rule which was nearly lost.

Since the death of Devapala the fall of the Pala empire started. After his death some chicken-hearted and good for nothing inheritors ascended to the throne. They could not keep up the glory and power of the Pala empire. As a result, the Pala empire gradually marched towards downfall. The tenure of regime of Bigrhapala the second from Devapala's son Bigrhapala the first ranges from 861 A.D. to 989 A.D. Narayanapala (866A.D.-920 A.D.), son of Bigrhapala the first ruled for a long time. He was a weak and spiritless ruler. As a result, during his reign

the boundary of the Empire started to shrink. After Narayanapala, RajjyaPala, Gopala the Second and Bigrahapala the Second ascended to the throne one after another. They ruled the kingdom supposedly from 920A.D.-995 A.D. During the time of Bigrahapala the Second the ruling power of the Pala kings was limited to only Gaur and its adjoining regions. During the time of these weak kings, the Pala Empire suffered huge losses at the attack of the kings belonging to Chondello and Kalchuri dynasties of northern India. As a result, inside the Pala empire there was the rise of the Kambajd dynasty in particular sections of North-west Bengal.

Thus with the Pala empire at the face of ruin, then Mahipala the first (supposedly 995A.D.-1043A.D.), competent son of Bigrahapala the ii came forward with a beam of hope. The most mentionable achievement of his life is driving away the Komboj and reestablishing the Pala empire after occupying east Bengal. Then he concentrated on conquering other kingdoms. His empire expanded from east Bengal to Varanasi and Mithila. He could maintain his own domination in most of the places in the kingdom from the attack of two strong royal powers of India of that time, Tamil king Rajendra Chol and the Chedi king Gangeyodeva.

Mahipala was a follower of Buddhism. He was a generous patron of Buddhism from his heart. He was careful of protecting the olden achievements. He built an enormous Buddhist monastery in Nalanda. Also in some Buddhist monasteries were also built in Vanarasi during his time.

Mahipala was attentive to humanitarian activities. Many large ponds and cities are still associated with his name. He founded many cities and dug many large ponds. The cities are Mahigonj of Rangpur district, Mahipur of Bogra district, Mahisontosh of Dinajpur district and Mahipala City of Murshidabad district. Among the 'dighis' Mahipala Dighi of Dinajpur and Sagar Dighi of Mahipala in Murshidabad are famous. Probably, Mahipala got this popularity through his mass welfare activities.

The sun of good luck of Pala dynasty rose again during the 50-year reign of Mahipala. This is why he will remain ever memorable in history. If Mahipala did not happen to appear during the quick fall of Pala empire, the ruling time of this empire would undoubtedly shrink more.

**Group work :** prepare a list of towns and ponds founded by Mahipala I mentioning their names and locations.

But Mahipala could not leave any capable posteriors. So, as soon as he died, the Empire started to be divided. After the time of Mahipala his son Nayapala (supposedly 1043A.D.-1058A.D.) and grandson Bigrahapala III (supposedly 1058A.D.-1075A.D.) ascended to the throne of Pala dynasty. During the reign of these weak kings, the king of Kolochuri, king of Chalukya of Karnataka, king of Orissa and Kamrupa attacked Bengal. When the Pala empire was exhausted for facing overseas attacks one after another for a long time, opposition and disagreement were noticed inside the country. With this chance small independent kingdoms came into being. Bihar which was beyond Bengal started to move from the control of Pala kings. Thus during Bigrahapala III the Pala empire of Bengal got divided in many independent parts.



The Mahipalaa II, son of Vighrahapala III, ascended to the throne of Pala dynasty. During his reign the disastrous condition got more intensified. At this time the Zaminders openly declared revolt in the Varendra region of north Bengal. This revolt is known as 'Kaibarta Revolt' in history. The leader of this revolt was Kaibarta hero Divyak or Divya. He occupied Varendra by slaying Mahipala II and established his own rule.

When Varendra region was occupied by the Kaibartas, Surpala, the II (supposedly 1080A.D.-1082A.D.), the younger brother of Mahipala II ascended to the throne of Pala Dynasty. It was he who was their last successful ruler. Biography of Ramapala can be known from 'Ramcharita' written by Sandhakar Nandi, an ancient Bengali poet. Ramapalaa, just after taking the responsibility of the kingdom, made attempts to regain Varendra.

To this end, the kings of fourteen countries including Rastrokut, Mogodha, Rahr came forward to help Ramapala with soldiers, arms and money. In this battle, Kaibarta king Bhim was defeated and killed. Then he set up a new capital named 'Rambati' near pre-Senat Maldaha. During the rule of subsequent kings 'Ramvati' itself was the capital of the Empire. After establishing supervisory power in Varendra, he established his domination over Magadha, Orissa and Kamrupa in order to bring back the lost glory of the Empire.

The bad luck of the Pala dynasty was that the subsequent rulers of Ramapala were very weak. As a result, they could not take hold of the Pala Dynasty strictly. After Ramapala, Kumarapala (supposedly 1124A.D.-1129 A.D.), Gopala III (1129A.D.-1143A.D.) and Madanpala (supposedly 1143A.D.-1161A.D.) ascended to the throne of Pala dynasty one after another. At this time warfare was a common affair. At last at the second phase of the twelfth century Bijoy Sena established the rule of Sena dynasty, destroying the existence of Pala empire.

**Grup work :** Identify what step did Ramapala take to bring back the lost glory of the Pala empire.

### **Independent Kingdoms of South-east Bengal**

South-east Bengal was independent during most of the periods of Pala age. Then this region was included in Banga 'Janapada'. From the middle of the eighth century quite a number of kings of dynasties sometimes ruled their areas independently declaring revolt against Pala kings, and sometimes they would accept submission of Pala kings.

**The Kharga Dynasty:** Subsequent kings belonging to the Gupta dynasty established their lordship in Magadha and Gaur in the second half of the seventh century. At this time the kings of the Kharag aynasty gave birth to an independent kingdom in south-east Bengal. Their capital was 'Karmanta Basaka'. Probably, 'Karmanta Basaka' is the ancient name of Comilla district. The possession of the Kharags was extended to Tripura and Noakhali region.

**The Deva Dynasty:** After the rule of Kharag dynasty there was the rise of Deva dynasty in the same region at the start of the eighth century. We get the names of four kings of this dynasty. They were Sree Santideva, Sree Beerdeva, Sree Anandadeva and Sree Bhabadeva. The Deva kings considered themselves very powerful. So, they attached big titles such as Param Saugata, Parama Vattaraka, Prameshwara Maharajadhiraja etc. with their names. Their capital was Devaparvata. This Debparvata was situated near Maynamoti in Comilla. The kingdom of the Devas was extended across the whole Samatata region. The Deva kings ruled supposedly from 740A.D. to 800 A.D.



The kingdom of Kantideva: An independent kingdom came into being in Horikela Janapada of south-east Bengal in the ninth century. The king of this kingdom was Kantideva. It is not known whether Kantideva had any relationship with Deva dynasty. His father's name was Dhandutta and grandfather's name was Bhadraddutta. Present Sylhet was included in the kingdom of Kantideva. The name of his capital was Burdwanpur. At present there is no existence of any region by this name. At this time was a rise of a new power known by Chandra dynasty in south-east Bengal. The kingdom built up by Kantidev was destroyed by this Chandra dynasty.

The Chandra Dynasty: Chandra dynasty was the most powerful independent dynasty of south-east Bengal. The kings of this dynasty ruled for one hundred and fifty years from the start of the 10th century to the middle of the eleventh century. The first king of Chandra Dynasty Purnachandra and his son Subarnachandra were probably the landlords of Rohitgiri. His title was 'Maharajadhiraj'. Troilakyachandra established the name of his own dynasty in Horikel, Chandradwip (Barisal and adjoining area), Bongo and Samatata i.e. in whole east and south-east Bengal. Lalmai Mountain was the main center of Chandra kings. This mountain was known as Rohitgiri in ancient time. He ruled for supposedly 30 years (900A.D.-930A.D.). Troilakyachandra's deserving inheritor was his son Sree Chandra. During his rule honor and power of Chandra dynasty reached the pinnacle of success. Undoubtedly, he was the best ruler. He assumed the title 'Parameshwara Parama Vattaraka Maharajadhiraja'. His kingdom was extended to North-east Kamrupa and Gaur in the North in addition to South-east Bengal. He established his capital in Bikrampur in the district of present Munshiganj.

Sree Chandra's son Kallyan Chandra (supposedly 975A.D.-1000A.D.) and grandson Ladaha chandra kept the glory of Chandra dynasty intact. Govindchandra son of Ladaha chandra was the last king of Chandra dynasty. During his reign Rajendra Chola, king of Chola and Karna, king of Kolochuri attacked Banga. These two external attacks lessened the power of the king and put an end to their rule.

### **The Varma Dynasty:**

The Pala administrative power having become weak at the last phase of eleventh century, a dynasty with the title 'Varma' shaped itself in south-east Bengal. He who laid foundation in Banga was Brojovarma's son Jaatvarma. It seems that Varma came to this country with the Kolochuri king. He was also a feudal king of Gangeyodeva, the Kolochuri king and Karna. During Kaibarta revolt he established an independent kingdom in South-east Bengal with the help and support of his father-in-law, Karna, the Kolochuri king. The capital of the Varma was in Bikrampur of Munshiganj district. After the time of Jatvarma, his eldest son Harivarma ruled 46 years at a stretch. He was on good terms with Pala kings. Harivarma extended his kingdom to Nagabhumi and Assam. After Harivarma, one of his sons became the king. But there is no account available of his reign. After his time Salvarma, the other son of Jatavarma became the king. Vhojavarma, son of Salvarma was the last king of varma dynasty because after the end of his reign there was no account of his dynasty. Probably, in the middle of the twelfth century Bijoy Sena belonging to Sena dynasty caused decline to the Varma dynasty and introduced the rule of Sena dynasty in South-east Bengal.

<b>Individual work:</b>
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Serial Name	of Dynasty	Time of Establishment
1	Chandra dynasty	eighth century
2	The kingdom of Kantideva	eleventh century
3	Kharag dynasty	tenth century
4	Varma dynasty	nineth century
5	Deva dynasty	seventhth century

### **The Sena Dynasty: (1161A.D. -1204 A.D.)**

After the fall of the Pala dynasty Sena dynasty started their rule in Bengal in the second half of the twelfth century. It is supposed that they were intruders in this country. The original abode of their forefathers was in Karnataka of the Deccan. According to some they were 'Brahmmakhatriya'. 'Brahmmakhatriya' are those who are first Brahmins and become Khatriya after changing their occupations. The founder of the Sena dynasty in Bengal was Samantasena. He showed heroism in his youth and first settled down in Rahr region on the Ganges at the last years of his life. Since he did not establish any kingdom, the dignity of the first king is given to Hemanta Sena, son of Sananta Sena. It is supposed that he was a feudal king under Ramapala.

After the death of Hemanta Sena, his son Bijoy Sena (1098A.D.-1160A.D.) ascended to the throne. During his long reign itself, the rule of the Sena dynasty was established on a strong foundation. It is he who probably established himself as an independent king from feudal king. During Kaibarta Revolt he helped Ramapala. South Rahr was under the Sura dynasty in the eleventh century. He married Bilashdebi, the princess of this dynasty. Bijoy Sena got recognition of being independent in exchange of helping Ramapala regain Varendra. Again, Rahr came under the possession of Bijoy Sena due to nuptial relation with Sura dynasty of South Rahr. Then Bijoy Sena brought South and East Bengal under his possession defeating the king of Barma. Taking the advantage of the weaknesses of the last kings of Pala dynasty, Bijoy Sena extended his lordship by defeating MadanPala and driving away the Palas from the south and south-east Bengal. Then he launched an attack on Kamrupa, Kalinga and Mithila. vijoyapura situated in Triveni of Hoogly district was the first capital of Bijoy Sena. The second capital was established in Bikrampur in the district of Munshiganj. Bijoy Sena assumed the titles like Param Maheshwar, Parameshwar Paramvattaraka Maharajadhiraj, Auriraj-Brishav-Shankar etc. The whole Bengal was under a single king first for a long time under only Sena dynasty.

Bijoy Sena was a follower of Shaiba religion. Poet Umapatidhar told about sacrificial rites observed by Bijoy Sena. It is supposed from these sacrificial rites that Bijoy Sena was respectful of Vedic religion. But some think that Bijoy Sena was an orthodox Hindu. He had zero tolerance towards other religions. This is why, Buddhism failed to flourish well in this country due to lack of patronage of Bijoy Sena and his inheritors.

After the reign of Bijoy Sena, his son Ballal Sena (1160A.D.-1178A.D.) ascended to the throne. During his reign he not only protected the kingdom of his father but also established Sena rule on a strong foundation by bringing Mogodha and Mithila under it. He married

Chalukya princess, Ramadebi. Along with other titles Ballal Sena assumed the title 'Auriraj Neeshanko Shamker'. At the old age he handed over the charge of running the kingdom on his son Laksman Sena and passed rest of his life by following 'Banprastha' with his wife near Triveni on the Ganges.

**Individual work :**

Ballal Sena was a great scholar. He had great fascination toward learning and the learned. He studies Veda, Smriti, Purano etc. He had a huge library. As a poet and a writer, his contribution to Sanskrit literature is endless. Before him, there was no ancient king in the history of Bengal who could manifest such extraordinary merit in literature. Ballal Sena composed two books named 'Dansagar' and 'Advutsagar'. The unfinished part of Advutsagar' was completed by his son Laxmana Sena. These two books are invaluable symbols of his reign in history. He established a new capital in Rampal. Ballal Sena was a great patronizer of Hinduism. As a result, during his reign while the Brahmmna religion became stronger, Buddhism became weaker. With a view to reshaping the Hindu society, he introduced a custom called 'Kowlinno'. As a result of that, the aristocrats of the society had to abide by some social regulations in practicing social rituals, wedding ceremonies etc.

After Ballal Sena his son Lakhsmana Sena (1178A.D.-1205A.D.) ascended to the throne at the age of 60. Like father and grandfather Laksman Sena was a skilled warrior and showed his skill in the battlefield. He brought Prag-Jotish, Gaur, Kalinga, Kashi, Mogodha etc. regions under Sena Empire. But he could not pass the last part of his life happily. At last he became inattentive to running of the kingdom due to long-standing warfare, old age debility and for other reasons and started to reside in the second capital Nabodwip on the Ganges like his father. As a result, Gaur turned into a playing ground of fearful intrigue and internal conflict and there grew internal disorder. Taking the advantage of the situation, Dommon Pala revolted and gave birth to an independent country in the Sundarbans region in 1196A.D.

Lakhsmana sena was himself a scholar and had eagerness to education. He completed his father's unfinished book 'Adbhut Sagar'. Some verses (sloke) written by him were also found. Many scholars and wise men would assemble in his royal court. Dhoyee, Sharon, Jaydeb, Gobardhan, Umapatidhar etc. famous poets adorned his royal court. Famous Indian scholar Holayud was his prime minister and religious chief. His contempoRahry other poets Sreedhar Das, Purushottam, Pashupati and Ishan were famous. Among the poets Gobardhan, Jaydeb, and Dhoyee became immortal by writing large poems Aryanshoptadashi, Gitagovind and Pabandut respectively. Besides literature, Bengali reached the summit of success at this time.

It appears that Laksman Sena was converted to Baishnab religion from Shaiba religion of his father and grandfather. He assumed the title Parambaishnab instead of Param Maheshwar of his father and grandfather. He was his father's suitable boy in practicing scriptures and religion. Muslim historian Minhaj has admired his charity and generosity very much.

Bakhtiar Khalji attacked Nadia at the beginning of the eleventh century. Old Lakhsmana Sena did not withstand this attack; rather he took shelter in Bikrampur of preSenat Munshiganj district, going there by river. Bakhtiar Khalji easily occupied north and north-west Bengal. Muslim Empire was established in Bengal centering round Lakhsanabati (Gaur). Living in

south-east Bengal, Lakhsmana Sena rules 3-4 years more. Very probably, he died in 1206A.D. (1205A.D. in another view). After the death of Lakhsmana Sena, his two sons Biswarup Sena and Keshob Sena ruled east Bengal for some time (till 1203A.D.). Yet, it can be said that Sena rule came to an end in Bengal with the defeat of Laksman Sena.

**Group work :** Why the ruler of ancient Bengal had taken different Titles ? Give a list of these Titles .

### **Ruling System of Ancient Bengal**

No accurate account of the ruling system of ancient Bengal is available before Gupta reign. The account of ruling system of ancient Bengal reminds us of Kauma society before all. Before establishing of Gupta rule in this country, the Kauma society was all in all. Then there was no king; so there was no kingdom. Yet, there was ruling system at a slight level. Then people lived together. Among the Kauma people, in the Panchayet system a leader selected by the Panchayet would lead local Kauma ruling system. The Kauma system in Bengal did not last for good. Before 4 BC, Kauma system broke down and monarchy reached its full development.

A clear account of ruling system in Bengal during Gupta regime is available. Supposedly, in 2nd-Third century north Bengal was brought under Maurya Empire. In Bengal the center of the Maurya rule was Pundranagar- in Mohasthangar five miles away from Bogra. It seems that the ruling system of Bengal was run by a royal representative at that time. Though Bengal was included in Gupta Empire, whole Bengal was not under direct rule of Gupta empire. The sections of Bengal which were not under direct rule of the Gupta Emperors were ruled by feudal kings with the title 'Maharaja' nearly independently and separately. These feudal kings would always accept the authority of the Gupta Emperors. Gradually, the Gupta Emperors introduced their rule all over Bengal. Many employees were appointed under these feudal kings.

The sections of Bengal which were not under the direct rule of Gupta Emperor were divided in a few administrative departments. Of them the largest department was 'Bhukti'. Again, every Bhukti in some 'Bishoy's'; every 'Bishoy' in some 'Mandal's'; every 'Mandal' in some 'Bithi's' and every 'Bithi' in some villages were divided. The village itself was the smallest unit of administration.

Gupta Emperor himself recruited the ruler of Bhukti. Sometimes the prince or royal family would recruit the ruler. The head of the 'Bhukti' was called a 'Uparika'. In the later periods the rulers would assume the title 'Uparika Maharaja'. Generally, 'Uparika Maharaja' himself would recruit rulers for his 'Bishoy's'.

The 'Bhukti' and 'Bishoya' of the the Gupta Age can be compared to present Division and District. A little information is available about civil ruling system of Gupta age. But there is no information about military rule. So little is our knowledge about revenue system. The names of only a handful of employees are available. It is clear that during Gupta regime a fair revenue system would be maintained.

The Gupta rule came to an end in north-west Bengal in the sixth century. Bongo became settled independently and separately. The new kingdom system that was developed in the then Banga was just like the provincial rule. The monarchy during the Gupta period was dependent on the feudal kings. It has not been changed yet in this age. Rather, feudal system has been wider. The

feudal kings of Bengal also assumed the title 'Maharajadhiraja' like Gupta kings. They would also recruit many employees of different classes.

In the middle of the eighth century a new age started with the establishment of Pala dynasty. During Pala rule of four hundred years they had their ruling system well established in Banga. Like that of before, the main thing of ruling system even in Pala regime was monarchy. The king himself was the head of the administration of the central government. The attacked Pala kings never stayed satisfied with the title 'Maharaja' of ancient Bengal or 'Maharajadhiraja' of the subsequent times. Like the Gupta emperor also they have taken these titles 'Paameshwara Parama Vattaraka, Maharajadhiraja' The son of the king would be the king. In spite of this rule prevailing, there were strife and conflict among brothers and other close relatives in the dynasty about ascending to the throne. Since then the reference of one prime minister or chief secretary was first available. He was the chief of all royal employees.

There was a definite number of administrative division to conduct all types of governance. A principal would be recruited for each of its departments. In spite of father being alive, the prince in many cases could conduct governance.

There were many sources of revenue of the central government. Among them the main sources were different types of tax. Different types of employees were recruited to collect taxes. There was an arrangement of looking after the accounts of income and expenditures and documents departments. Importance would be given on the survey of land to determine land tax. Taxes would be collected in the form of money and crops. During the reign of Pala dynasty, there were good judiciary and police department to ensure peace in the country. At that time, there espionage groups to collect secret information. The military was divided in infantry, cavalry, elephant and navy.

There are also references of feudal kings in the time of the Pala dynasty like the Guptas. They had different titles. The feudal kings were under compulsion to submit to the power and strength of the central rule. Of course, in many cases they would declare independence taking the advantage of the weaknesses of the central rule. The power of Pala rulers depended to a great extent on the help and cooperation of these feudal kings.

The administrative system which was introduced in the Pala kingdom was recognized as an ideal for ruling the country during small dynasties and the Sena dynasty in the subsequent periods. Of course, there were some changes in some cases. The kings of the Sena dynasty would assume various titles in addition to royal title of Pala kings. During this time the Queen would be given royal dignity. The princes had enough influence on ruling the kingdom. The eldest son of the king would be the prince.

There were many feudal rulers during the Sena dynasty as before. They had very violent power and influence. Actually, these feudal kings would lead their life like independent kings in their respective regions.

This was fairly the administrative system of ancient Bengal. It is not possible to say how much influence external powers had on this administrative system. According to scholars, Bengal did not lag behind in comparison to other parts of India in respect of administrative system during that time.

**Group work :** Give a list of sources of income of the government of ancient Bengal.

## Questions for Practice

### Multiple Choice Questions:

1. When was the Gupta empire established in India?
 

a. 320 A.D.	b. 321 A.D.
c. 322 A.D.	d. 323 A.D.
2. Sasanka made friendship with Devagupta, the king of Malaba -
  - a. to bring Pashyobhuti under control.
  - b. to bring Maukhuri under control.
  - c. to make Rajyosree a captive.

Which one of the following answers is correct?

- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. i and ii   | b. i and iii     |
| c. ii and iii | d. i, ii and iii |

### Read the stimulant and answer the questions 3 and 4:

Rupganj Union has been being governed peacefully for quite a long time. But during the governance of unskilled and weak Chairman Suman, local people grew displeased for different reasons. At one stage they removed Suman from his position by revolting under the leadership of Durjoy.

3. Which revolutionary leader's ideal of history is reflected in revolutionary leader Durjoy?
 

a. Bhim	b. Divyak
c. Mahipala, II	d. Bigrahapala
4. The cause of deposition of the same leader like Suman are -
  - i. failure to stop rebellion
  - ii. inefficiency as a leader
  - iii. inability to solve the problems of the people

Which one of the following questions is correct?

- |              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| a. i         | b. ii and iii    |
| c. i and iii | d. i, ii and iii |



**Creative Questions:**

1. Ajay started to live with his family in Nabinagar leaving his old abode. In course of time he became a administrator of Nabingar. He did many thngs for the development of the area. Besides, his posteriors also made contributions to education, culture and literature. The people of different religions in his area would become the victims of discrimination.
  - a. Where was the capital of Kharg dynasty?
  - b. Why are the Senas called Brahmmakhatrya?
  - c. Which Sena ruler's activities are reflected in those of Nabinagar's administrative Ajay? Explain.
  - d. Do you think the posteriors of that said ruler made adequate contribution to education and literature? Justify your answer.
2. The Chairman of Ramnagar Municipalaity Saumen Barua established an academic institution in his area. Learners from home and abroad had the opportunity to study in that institution. He became attentive to the advantages of different religious people following their respective religions. He also became able to establish order and peace in his municipalaity. As a result, he got an opportunity of remaining the administrator of the municipalaity for a long time.
  - a. Who is the founder of the Pala dynasty?
  - b. What does Matsannay mean?
  - c. Is there any similarity between the activities of the chairman of Ramnagar MuniciPalaity and those of Dharmapala in setting up modern academic institutions? Explain it .
  - d. The ideal and inspiration of Dharmapala worked behind Saumen Barua's ruling the municipalaity for a long time. Evaluate the justification of the kingdomment .

## **Chapter: Four**

### **Social, economic and cultural history of ancient Bengal**

Man is a social being. Living in a society is his nature. This needs mutual cooperation. That is why man is required to develop different economic, political and other social institutions. Three things are necessary for survival of man. These are food, cloth and shelter. Next to these, man pays attention to education, science, art, law for their development to lead a beautiful life. The unified form of these activities of man in the development of social life is called culture. Before the arrival of the Aryans, the people of ancient Bengal formed a social and cultural life. This is, indeed, the most ancient form of Bengal Socio-culture. According to scholars the name of their language was 'Austic'. As a nation they were called 'Nishad'. Afterwards, a nation called 'Alpine' got mixed with the people of Bengal. A flow of different human communities has got mixed with the people of Bengal. As a result, they have been known as 'Crossbred' people. The people of Bengal have achieved a trait of respective arms and organs as a result of a variety of exchanges and integration for many years. As a result, the heads of the most of the people of Bengal are round-shaped; hair is black; the shape of the nose is fairly average; the skin-complexion is fair; the face is of medium shape i.e. neither round nor long. These body features of medium shape are the traits of the Bengalese.

**At the end of this chapter we will be able to:**

- Give an account of the socio-economic condition of Bengal;
- Give an account of art, architecture, sculpture and painting of ancient Bengal;
- Explain the origin and development of language and literature of ancient Bengal;
- Explain values and beliefs of the people showed to religion, occasions, festivals and practices of ancient Bengal
- Hold positive idea about the contributions of the then dynasties in the socio-economic and cultural practice;
- Be interested in knowing the origin and development of the cultural life of ancient Bengal through the study of history.

### **Society, Economy and Culture of Ancient Bengal**

#### **Social life in Ancient Bengal**

Before the Maurya rule no political identity grew up in the people of Bengal in a broader sense. During this time the society was divided in different class. It was called Kaula society. Before the Aryans some religious thoughts spread into Hinduism in the later periods. Among them remarkable are Karmafal (consequences of one's actions especially of previous birth that governs one's weal and woe), belief in rebirth, practice of yoga etc. The influence of many customs and manners of this age are noticed in Hindu society in the later periods. For example, giving the guests to eat betel and nut, singing for the Shiva, anointing turmeric on body in marriage, putting on 'dhuti-shari' (white cotton sari with narrow border of any color put on by widows of Hindu society or by Brahmins or worshippers) and using vermillion in the forehead of married women etc.

The caste system was a very essential part of Aryan society. As a result of their living here for a long time, this system was also introduced in Bengal. There were four castes in Bengal in the ancient time. They are Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. In the later periods more varieties of crossbred people originated. Every caste in the society had particular occupation. Studying, teaching and performing religious activities were the jobs of the Brahmins. They would get highest dignity in the society. The occupation of the Kshatriyas was fighting. Trade and commerce was done by the Vaishyas. The Sudras of the lowest class would generally do agricultural work, fishing and other lower jobs. People of all other castes except the Kshatriyas would associate with one another. Generally, marriage would take place within the same caste, but the system of marriage was also in vogue between a groom of higher class and a bride of lower class. But in later period strict rule was imposed on this matter.

In those days men of Bengal traveling abroad did not have any fame. But women of Bengal girls had fame for their good qualities. The girls would receive education. In those days there was no system of putting on veils. But Bengal women did not have freedom. Taking only one wife was the social rule. But men could keep more than one wife. A widow had to take food without animal protein (fish and meat) and give up luxury. The husband being dead, the wife would also be roasted to death along with her husband. This system is called 'Satidaha Pratha'. Women did not have any right on wealth and property. We can know about the good moral character of the Bengalees from the ancient religious scriptures of Bengal. But it cannot be said that there was no corruption and obscenity in the social life of the Bengalees.

Like the present time in those days the staple food of the Bengalees were rice, fish, meat, vegetables, milk, curd, ghee, kheer etc. Different types of cakes were also popular tasty foods. The Bengali Brahmins and Bangalee Brahmanas would eat protein. Then all types of fish were available. In the East Bengal Hilsa and dried fish were very popular foods. Vegetables such as brinjal, gourd, pumpkins, jhinge, kakrul, arum etc. were produced. Fruits such as mangoes, jackfruits, Palams, coconuts, sugarcane were available. But there is nothing written about pulses. In addition to different kinds of drink like milk, coconut water, juice of sugarcane, Palam juice were in good use. Different kinds of wine would be produced by fermenting rice, wheat, sugarcane, would be taken molasses, honey and Palam juice. Different types of drink belonging to wine class. After meal there was a custom of chewing betel with spices.

In the matter of dresses there was no pomp and gorgeousness except kings and rich people. Men and women in Bengal would put on 'dhuti' and sari respectively. Men would put on dhuti tucking it between legs like a suspender and that did not reach below the knee. Sari of women reached the heel. Sometimes men used wrapper and girls used 'urna' (a piece of cloth covering chest). There was an arrangement of special dress for different occasions. The custom of using ornaments was in vogue among men and women. They put on earring, necklace, bangles, mol etc. Only women enjoyed wearing bangles of conch and many bangles in their hands. The rich used ornaments made of gems and jewels, gold and silver. Women put up hair in a bun in different styles. Men had hair hanging above their shoulder. Mixture of perfume with cosmetics like camphor, sandal etc. was widely in vogue. Lac-dye, vermilion, kumkum (a ball filled with red powder and scented water for sprinkling) were used in the dressing up of women. Men sometimes used clogs made of wood and leather sandals. The use of umbrella was also in vogue then.

There were arrangements of different types of sports and amusement in those days. But singing and dancing were more in vogue. Vina, flute, mridango, dhak dhol khol, kartal even earthenware were used as musical instruments. Wrestling, hunting, exercise, boat racing, and juggling were very popular with men. Amusement like gardening, swimming were also in vogue among women.

'annoprashon' (when a baby eats rice for the first time), marriage, obituary etc. social occasions were in vogue in those days also. There were thirteen parbans (programs) in twelve months. On these occasions there were arrangements of festivals and amusements. Like the present time, 'Vhatriditia', Nabanno, Rathjatra Astomisnan, Holi, Jonmastomi (birthday of Lord Krishna), Dashhara, 'Akhyatritia', 'Gangansnan'(bathing in the Ganges as religious ritual) etc. are familiar programmes which were in vogue also in those days. Besides these various amusements and festivals, worldly occasions occupied a special place in the social life in ancient times. 'Garbadhan, Simantonayon etc. programs would be held for the welfare of the baby to be born. After birth, some programs like naming the baby, 'annoprashon' etc. usages would be held. The influence of the religious scriptures on the daily life of the people of ancient Bengal was very strong. The rules on which hour which food is prohibited, on which hour fasting is suitable and which time is auspicious for marriage, starting of education of child, going abroad, pilgrimage etc. were strictly followed.

The main form of transport of the people of ancient Bengal was cart drawn by oxen and boat. Shafts and donga were used to move through canals and marshes. People would cross canals by small bridge made of bamboo. The rich would use elephants, horses, horse-drawn cart as forms of transport. Their wives and female family members would go from one place to another by Palaanquin or boat. After marriage a bride would be brought to her father-in-law's house by cart drawn by oxen or Palaanquin. After all it seems that there was no difference between the lifestyle of modern village life and the lifestyle of that time.

As an agricultural country, people of Bengal lived in villages. The life of the people was happy after all. Of course, we can know about the poor people of ancient Bengal. The main power was in the hands of the high class of people i.e. the Brahmanas. In this time, only the Brahmanas could practice the knowledge of scriptures. The oppression of the Brahmanas was intolerable to the general people. This oppression was more exercised upon the Buddhists. General people were very displeased at the oppression of the Sena rulers at the later stages. During Sena regime distress descended on Buddhist society and culture. During Sena rule ordinary Hindu society got weak as a result of the influence of the Brahmanas. At the last stage of ancient Bengal the foundation of the Muslim society started to grow up at this disordered condition. The Middle Age came into being through the establishment of Muslim society. During this time the form of society and culture of Bengal got changed.

**Individual Task:** Make a list of dresses, ornaments, musical instruments and sports and games of ancient Bengal.

## **Economic condition and art and sculpture of Ancient Bengal**

### **The economic condition of Ancient Bengal**

Bengal is always an agricultural country. Most of the people of Bengal in the ancient time lived in villages. They would all together build up villages. And they maintained their families

by cultivating the surrounding lands of the villages. Those who cultivated lands or used lands by any means had to pay some specified taxes. There were mainly three types of land. Habitable lands with houses were called 'bastu', cultivable fertile lands were called 'khetro' and fertile but unused lands were called 'khil'. In addition to these three types of land, there were other types. They are meadows, market places, infertile lands, forests and lands for transport. It is thought that at this time the owner of the lands was the king himself. During that time land would be measured with some kind of grass plant called 'nol'. The length of the 'nol' was different in different places.

Bengal was famous for agriculture from the ancient time. So, the economy of the country was built up depending on agriculture. Paddy was the main crop of Bengal. Besides, Bengal had fame for jute, sugarcane, cotton, indigo, mustard and betel cultivation. Fruit-bearing trees were mango, jackfruit, coconut, betel-nut, pomegranate, banana, lemon, fig, dates etc. Cardamom, cloves etc. were also produced in Bengal. Domestic animals were cows, goat, ram, poultry, dog etc. Salt and dried fish were produced in some parts of the country.

Ancient Bengal was very rich in cottage industry. All things necessary for village people were produced in the village itself. Things made of earth included pitcher, small pitcher-shaped water-pot, hemispheroidal cup, large pots for cooking, dishes etc. Things made of iron were chopper, axe, spade, spud, small spud, plough etc. Besides, water-pot and fighting-weapons like arrow, spear, sword etc. were produced. Gold industry and gems and jewels industry developed very much for luxury things. Wood industry was also very developed. Furniture used in families, houses, temples, Palaanquin, cart drawn by horse and cow, rath etc. were made of wood itself. Moreover, different types of boat to move in rivers and big boats and ships to move in the sea were made of wood.

Though is an agricultural country, different kinds of industrial goods would be produced from ancient time. Bengal became famous for textile industry in the very ancient time. Famous Muslin cloth would be produced in Bengal from the very ancient time. This cloth was so delicate that 20 yards of Maslin could be stuffed into a snuff box. Bengal was also noted for sophisticated and delicate cloth made from cotton and silk. Coarse cloth made from cotton and hemp was produced. It is known that tin was available in Bengal at that time.

Agricultural and industrial goods were in plenty in Bengal. Again, these goods were in great demand in different regions of India and in many countries of the world. So, Bengal would conduct business with many countries of the world in the ancient time. Export oriented products of Bengal such as cotton and silk cloth, sugar, molasses, salt, cassia leaves and other spices, rice, coconut, betel-nut, plants for producing medicine, different types of diamonds, pearls, emerald etc. were worth mentioning.

With the development of industry, trade and commerce of Bengal widely expanded. Commercial exchanges were done through both road and water ways. In addition to trade inside the country, Bengal was specially developed in foreign trade at that time. Bengal conducted exchange of goods with other regions of India through road and water ways. That is why big cities and commercial ports were established in many places of Bengal. These are Nabyabashika, Kotibarsha, Pundrabardhan, Tamrolipto, Karnasubarna, Saptagram etc. Of course, in addition to cities trade and commerce would be conducted in village markets.

In these village markets daily necessities produced in the villages were bought and sold. Bengal would conduct exchanges of goods with countries such as ceylon, Burma, Champa, Kamboj, Javadwip, Malaya, Shyam, Sumatra, China etc. by sea. Trades were conducted with China, Nepala, Bhutan, Tibet and Middle Asia by road.

As a result of industrial development and expansion of trade and commerce, riches and wealth of Bengal increased tremendously. May be, there was a custom called 'Binimoy Pratha' (custom of exchange of goods) for sale and purchase, and trade and commerce. Probably, before the 4th century BC usage of currency started in Bengal. Though different types of currency were prevalent in different times in Bengal, here cowries would be used as the smallest denomination.

**Group work:** Show in table with which countries ancient Bengal had commercial relation by sea and road.

### Art, Architecture and Sculpture

There are many testimonies of architecture, sculpture, paintings of ancient Bengal in different places of Bangladesh. The fine arts of ancient Bengal have been destroyed due to various factors. Yet, it can be undoubtedly said that the fine arts in the ancient time was very nice.

**Architecture:** A very little of the testimonies of architecture of ancient Bengal has been discovered. We can get some information about many edifices, temples, heaps and monasteries with inlays of Bengal from descriptions of Chinese travelers Fa-Hien and Hiuen-tsang and from ancient inscriptions.



Picture: Shalban Vihara, Moynamati, Comilla

The most ancient architectural testimonies of ancient Bengal are heaps. During the Vedic times in order to bury the dead bodies and in order to protect the heaps of earth on the crematory this architectural method would be adopted. Wherever Buddhism expanded, there were constructed many small and big heaps. In ancient Bengal some Buddhist and Jain heaps were constructed. A heap made of bronze or eight metals of King Deb Kharag has been found in the village Ashrafpur in the district of Dhaka. It is probably the testimony of the most ancient heap. Two more heaps of bronze have been found at Paharpur of Rajshahi and Jheuary of Chittagong. Besides, many heaps made of bricks have been found at Paharpur of and Bahulara of Bakura.

From very ancient time Buddhist and Jain monks preached their respective religion by building monasteries and temples in Bengal. But they can be called the works of architecture because they were built with bamboo and wood on structures of bricks and stones. In course of time when the number of Buddhist and Jain preachers started to increase, monasteries made of bricks started to be built. During the Pala rule, monasteries took a changed form. Some of these monasteries were big and some were full of inlays. These have also been ruined like heaps. The enormous Buddhist monastery discovered at Paharpur of Rajshahi is an excellent testimony of architectural art of ancient Bengal. This is the largest of all monasteries that have been discovered in Indian subcontinent up to now. It is known that in the 8th century Dharmapala built a stupendous monastery here. Sompur Vihara earned fame in all India and outside India.



Besides Sompur Vihara, Dharmapala built two more viharas Bikramshil Vihara and Udantapur Vihara. In addition, the names of some more small and large Viharas built during Pala rule have been collected such as Jagdul Vihara of Maldah, Devikot Vihara, Pundit Vihara of Chittagong, Konostup Vihara of Tripura etc. Some years back some more viharas have been discovered at Moynamati of Comilla. These are Known as Shalban Vihara. Some think that there were larger temples and viharas at Moynamati than at Paharpur.

In the history of architecture of Indian subcontinent the temples of ancient Bengal have occupied a special place in building dignity and individuality, Because many temples were built here in the ancient time. All these temples have been ruined today. Only testimonies of a number of broken and half-broken temples are in hand. All the temples were situated in the regions of Pundrabardhan, Samatata, Rahr, Varendra etc. The temple of Barakar of the district of Bardwan is thought to be the most ancient of ancient Bengal. The temple of Paharpur is an immortal creation in the history of this subcontinent because it has deeply influenced the architectural sites of the rest of the subcontinent. A temple made of stone and another made of bronze have been discovered at Bangarh in the district of Dinajpur and at Kewary of Chittagong respectively.

Very recently in the village Wari-Bateswar nearly 2500 year old ruins of a city have been discovered. It is situated in Belbo upazilla in the district of Narsingdi 75 km away from Dhaka. It has been thought so long that the civilization of ancient Bengal was a village oriented civilization. But as a result of this discovery, it can be said with emphasis that a city -based civilization built up in ancient Bengal.



Picture: Discovered the ruins of Wari-Bsteswar

**Sculpture:** At the start of A.D. or from its previous year, there was practice of sculpture side by side of architecture. There were many temples in ancient Bengal. So, there is no doubt that sculptural art was developed very much. Though temples were destroyed in many places, images of Gods were protected. Only in the regions such as Pushkoron, Tamluk, Mahasthana etc. some images made of burnt-earth of the age prior to Gupta reign have been discovered.

Features of own structural art of Bengal are known from inscribed stones and slabs made of burnt-earth on the body of the temple of Paharpur. If it is justified from the perspective of theme and artistic strategy, the sculptural art of Paharpur can be classified in three ways-folk art, aristocratic art and artistic strategy between the two. In sculptures of Paharpur there are inscriptions of many stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata and activities of Lord Krishna. In addition, many things of daily life of the general people have been expressed in the sculptures. In addition inscribed sculptures, burn-earth crafts were very developed in ancient Bengal. Quite a number of slabs of burnt-earth and images have been discovered at Moynamati and Lamai Hill of Comilla. Many slabs of burnt-earth have been



Pic: Inscribed slabs made of burnt-earth on the body of the temple of Paharpur

discovered in the ruins of an ancient city of Kotibarsha. The scholars think that they belong to the times of Kushana, Gupta and Palas. Some images of burnt-earth have also been found in the ruins of Karnashubarna, the capital of Gaur.

**The Art of Painting:** No painting belonging to the age prior to Pala regime is yet be found. But there is no doubt that there was the practice of painting in Bengal in ancient time. Usually, the custom of painting was in vogue in order to beautify the walls of the temples and viharas. In those days the Buddhist writers would make manuscripts of their books on Palam leaves or paper. In order to insert pictures in these books, the writers and artists would draw small pictures.

The artists of ancient Bengal showed adequate efficiency in painting through lines. A 'puthi' (book) 'Astosahasrika Proggaparomita' composed during the reign of King Rampala is an excellent testimony of painting of Bengal. Another example of painting through lines is raised line-painting of Bishnu on the other side of a copper plate with royal edict or inscription of DommonPala found in the Sundarbans.

Pala regime is memorable in the field of art of painting of ancient Bengal. The art of the age from the 9th century to the 12th century can generally be called the art of painting of Pala regime because the art policies of this age persisted also during the Sena age. The images of Gods and Goddesses made of stone and metals are considered as the excellent testimonies of the art of painting of this age. There was much religious influence on these paintings. The images of Gods and Goddesses were made in accordance with the edicts of scriptures. Yet, artistic strategy and aesthetic Senas of the artists are found in these works of art. Usually, mixture of eight metals and black touchstone would be used in making the images. In addition, the use of gold and silver was in vogue.

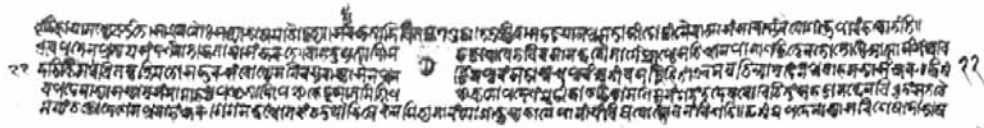
### **Bengali Language and Literature: Origin and Development**

Before the Aryans came to ancient Bengal, people of different races and small communities lived here. They were not Austric speaking Hindus. But in which language they spoke has not been traced as yet. It can be said without assimilating the classification of human languages with the divisions of communities that the ancient people of Bengal were not multi-lingual.

The most primitive people probably were the people of Austro-Asiatic race belonging to Austric community. They were the relatives of Kher branch of Mone and Komboj of Myanmar and Thailand. These kinds of people seemed to be called Nishad or Naga and afterwards 'Kollo', 'Villo' etc. So, it can be surmised that their language was also like the language of 'Mone' and 'Kher' of Austric community. Kol, Munda, Sautal etc. small ethnic community of Bangladesh and people of Khasia mountain of present Assam still speak much in such languages. In addition to Austric community, people of different branches of Dravidic community lived in Bengal. They were the people of civilized races. Their main abode was in the Deccan. But once they spread themselves in West Bengal and Middle Bengal.

Besides, people of Austro-Asiatic and Dravidic language, people of different races of Mongol or Bhot Chinese community and small tribes came to east and north Bengal since a long time. They are Garo, Boaro, Koch, Mech, Kachari, Tipai, Chakma etc. Probably, they were called Kirats. They spoke in different ethnic languages of Bhot Chinese community. Some words and writing methods of these languages are hidden in Bengali and Sanskrit language. Linguists have been able to discover some of its testimonies.

After the language communities of Austric, Dravid and Bhot Chinese, the people of a new language community who entered Bengal were Aryans. The name of the language of the Aryans is ancient Vedic language. In the later periods this language was reformed. The ancient language being reformed is called Sanskrit. Probably, at the last stage of the Vedic period they started to come to Bengal and within the first century A.D. they completed settling down in this country. Like other regions of the Indian sub-continent they lived side by side with the small ethnic community for a long time. As a result, the inhabitants of the small ethnic communities gave up their own language and completely picked up the Aryan language. So, the language that the Aryans used in the most ancient time and the language in which Vedic books were written experienced many changes due to differences of time and places. 'Prokrito' from Sanskrit and 'Apobhrongsho' from 'Prokrito' originated. Bengali language originated from 'Apobhrongsho' in the eighth century. For example: Krishno>Kanho>Kanu> Kanai.



Picture: Charyapad

There is no means to know about the form of Bengali language before the ninth and the tenth century. Yet, during these centuries two languages other than Bengali were in vogue in Bengal. One of them is 'Shouroshehi Apobhrangsho' and the other is local Gaur-Bengal form of 'Maghdhi Apobhrongsho' - which is called the most ancient Bengali language. The same writer would write verses, 'dohas', and songs in these two languages. Such the most ancient testimony of Bengali language has been found in four ancient Buddhist 'puthis' collected from NePala by Haraprasad Shasri. They are known as 'Charyapada'. Till now 47 Charyapades have been found. Bengali literature came into being in these very Charyapads. In the following periods Sohojia songs, Baul songs, and Baishnab verses originated. Therefore, the importance of these 'Charyapads' is unlimited from the perspective of the history of Bengali language and literature. It can be fairly said that the ancient age of Bengali language and literature is 500 years from the eighth century to the twelfth century.

## Cultural life, Values and Beliefs of Ancient Bengal

### Religious Conditions of Ancient Bengal :

Nothing exact can be known which religion was in vogue in ancient Bengal before the establishment of Aryan religion. Because the history of the religious activities of those primitive settlers in the history of worshipping, fear and devotion, beliefs and prejudices of the people of small ethnic communities of country Bengal confined in Janapadas. Then the nature of religion was not the same throughout the country. Rather differences were noticed in religious activities with the differences of castes, classes, Kaum, Janapad etc. All the same, their ancient religious beliefs, prejudices, methods of worshipping were transformed and mixed with the Aryan religion. Still today, tree worshipping, use of mango leaves in worshipping, sheaf of paddy, grass, banana, betel-nut, coconut, small pitcher-like container, vermilion etc. in vogue among village women in Bangladesh is derived from the people of small communities. Thus the worshipping of Manasa, Shoshan Kali, Banadurga, Shosti etc. bear the identity of the religious activities of the small communities. People of different Kaums such as Khasia, Munda, Sautal, Rajbangshi, Buno, Shabar worship trees, stones, mountains, birds and

animals, fruits and roots as Gods and Goddesses like their primitive forefathers. Like ancient India in those days there was in vogue different kinds of 'flag-worshipping'. Flag worshipping was a symbol of unity to the people of Kaum.

From the very fourth century Bengal came under the influence of three large religions of the sub-continent Vedic, Buddhist and Jain religion. Though non-Vedic Aryan religion expanded somewhat in Bengal before the Gupta regime, there was no spread of Aryan-Vedic religion and culture here up to the third- fourth century. It is known from copper inscriptions that the Brahmins settled down in many places of Bengal coming from 'Moddhyadesh'. They performed burnt sacrifices and discussed Vedas. The kings and great king Maharajas tried to attain virtues by giving away lands for running religious activities and constructing temples. Thus the waves of Vedic religion and culture reached the eastern frontier of Bengal in the sixth century.

Also in Pala regime the influence and power of the Vedic religion kept undamaged. As a result of the patronage of Barma and Sena rulers Vedic religion spread further in the eleventh and the twelfth century. Almost all of the kings and the Maharajas believed in Brahmin religion. Then Buddhism got damaged to a great extent. The practice of ablution-charity-meditation activities started with Vedic burnt offerings to mythical Gods and Goddesses at particular lunar day and of stars. Thus the customs of jatkarma (rites of child-birth), Nishkramon (going out), naming, 'Annaprashan' Finalization, 'Uponoyon', Convocation, Marriage, Entry to new house etc. started to spread in the Brahmin society of Bengal. The Brahmins gained cooperation from the government to spread these prejudices across the country.

Though Vedic and Brahmin religions spread very fast in Bengal, in course of time evolution was noticed in them. During the Gupta reign a new Brahmin religion appeared in this country. The identity of the Vedic Gods and Goddesses nearly got obliterated. Instead of that, worshipping of new Gods and Goddesses started. There were similarities between the names of these Gods and those of the Vedic Gods. But there was no similarity between the Vedic activities and them. These new Gods and Goddesses were basically the Gods and Goddesses depicted in the Purana's and epics. So, this religion is called Pouranic Religion. Such evolution was noticed in the Aryan religion due to the influence of local religious faiths. The 'Purohitas'(priests) got all-out responsibility to conduct religious activities. The complexities of religious activities increased. The custom of sacrificing animals instead of offerings of milk and ghee at the altar of Gods spread further. Various types of superstitions appeared as the parts of religion.

The spread of primordial religion and prejudices seen during Pala the reign became wider during the Sena rule. On the occasions of solar eclipse, lunar eclipse, 'Utthan dadoshi Tithi', 'Uttarayan', Sangakranti Ablutions, the Sacrament of offering drinking water to manes and deities, worshipping, Sukhratri Brata, Holaka or Holi festival of the present time, Janmastomi, programs of deductive lessons etc. primordial religious activities were widely seen in this age.

The followers of Baishnava religion are more remarkable than other religious communities coming from the customs and activities of primordial worshipping and obsequies. The testimony of the

development of Baishnava religion during the age of the Palas, the Chandras and the Kombojs has been found in different inscriptions. Though many of the Pala kings were the patrons of Buddhism, they were respectful of Baishnava religion like other religions. But the condition of



Pic: Bardhaman Mahabeer



Sena kings were more different. Though the forefathers used to worship 'Sadashiva', king Laxsman Sena was a Parambaishnava. From his time itself at the start of royal rule the practice of worshipping Bishnu instead of Shiva started.

Shaiba religion was also in vogue during the Gupta reign. Shaiba religion spread in east Bengal at the co-operation of great king Bainnyagupta at the beginning of the sixth century. Sasanka, the king of Gaur and Bhaskar Barma, the king of Kamrup were both extremely Shaibo in the seventh century. Though Laxsman Sena and his generations were followers of Baishnab religion, they never abandon their lineage God, Sodashiva. The followers of Pashupat in Aryabarta were the most ancient Shaiba community. During the Pala rule Pashupat community was very powerful. In addition to the worshipping of these Gods and Goddesses, the worshipping of many other primordial Gods and Goddesses was in vogue. Of them the worshipping of the Sun and of the Power were most remarkable.



Pic: Gautom Buddah

In the sixth century B.C. the founder of Jainism Burdwan Mahaveera came to Rahr. But the people there did not have faith in his religion; rather they maltreated him. In spite of that the progress of Jainism could not be resisted. The followers of this religion were known as 'Nigrahanta' from the ancient time. This name was in vogue till the Gupta age. During the rule of emperor Asoka followers of Jainism were found in north Bengal. In the fourth century A.D. there was a Jain Vihara at Paharpur of Natore. In the seventh century Nigrahanta Jain religion had the greatest influence in north, south and East Bengal. They were the majority in Samatata and Pundrabardhana. Also in the thirteen century there was the existence of the Nigrahanta or Jain association as usual. But since the start of the Pala regime, the influence of Jainism came down.

In the religious world of ancient Bengal Buddhism has occupied a special place. After the death of Buddha, Buddhism spread in some places of Bengal. It was the reign of emperor Asoka when Buddhism expanded much. Though Buddhism did not much spread in the Gupta age and post Gupta age, it had much eagerness and strength. At the start of the sixth century Mahazana Buddhism was established in Tripura, the most eastern end of Bengal. There were many Buddhist Viharas in the region of Comilla. As a result of the arrival of the Pala dynasty the influence of Buddhism increased a lot in Bengal. Buddhism won victory in Bengal from the eighth century to the eleventh century. With their active patronage for a long period of four hundred years this religion gained international dignity and recognition across Bengal and Bihar. They built many Buddhist Viharas. Of them Bikramshil Mahavira of Dharmapala, Sompur Vihara and Udantapur Vihara are the most remarkable. Many people from Tibet and other regions used to come to these viharas to acquire knowledge about Buddhism. Mahapanditacharya (Great Scholar) Bodhibhadra lived at Sompur Vihara. Scholar Atish Dipankar also lived at this Vihara for some time. In addition to Bengal, there were many small and large Buddhist Viharas in the region of Rahr, Varendra, Dinajpur, Tripura, Comilla and Chittagong. Some years back ruins of some Viharas has been found at Maynamati in Comilla. Of them the very large vihara is known as 'Shalban Vihara'. It was established by Sreevabadeva. Sahazia religion become very popular to the lower level of the society.

Like the Pala kings, the people of Chandra dynasty and the dynasty of Kantidebeva were also Buddhists. But after the arrival of Sena kings they tried to revive in Bengal Shaibo and Baishnab

religion, and ancient Vedic primordial religious activities and manners. During the Sena rule itself worshipping of Gods and Goddesses such as Bishnu, Shiva, Parbati etc. started and many Hindu temples were built. As a result, the fall of Buddhism started in Bengal. Then the last brunt came from the Turkish Muslims. At the end of the twelfth century as a result of Turkish attack when the Buddhist Viharas and temples of first Magadha and then north Bengal were destroyed, immediately the Buddhist association being driven away from this last abode of the eastern end of India went to Nepala and Tibet. Buddhist association itself was the main center of Buddhism. So, with Buddhist associations Buddhism was also obliterated from Bengal and even India.

Though there was the existence of Vedic, Puranic, Jain, Buddhist and other religious communities in ancient Bengal, there was no spite and clash among them. They lived side by side in harmony. Especially, the Pala kings though patrons of Buddhism were respectful of other religions. In ancient Bengal there is a story of malice of only Sasanka to other religions. Of course there is adequate suspicion about its truth. We can know from Tibetan and Chinese informations that in ancient time the religious life of Bengal was quite developed and tolerance to other religions was one of the traits of Bengalee character.

**Individual Work:** Mention the names of religious communities of ancient Bengal.

### **Rites and Occasions, Festivals, Customs and Practices of Ancient Bengal**

There was enough arrangement of worshipping and amusements in ancient Bengal. On the occasion of the Durga Puja there would be held a huge festival in Varendra. On the day of Bijoya Dashami, there would be a program on musical dance named 'Shaborothshoba'. In the month of Chaitra there was a practice of organizing a type of obscene songs with instrumental music. 'Holaka' or present 'Holi' was a main festival. Men and women all participated in this festival. There was orbit-sport on the night of Kajagori full moon. The main part of that night was eating different types of food made of dried rice and coconut together with all relatives. A special festival named 'Duyt-patipada' would be held in the month of Kartik in dark half of the month. In this very month Sukhratribrata would be held. 'Bhatriditiya', Akashpradip, Janmastomi, Askhoy Tritia, Dashhara, Gangasnan, Brahmmaputrasnan in Mahastomi etc are familiar programs of today which were also in vogue in that age.

In addition to festivals on the occasion of worshipping, many mundane programs occupied a special place in the social life of ancient Bengal. Before the birth of a baby. Gorvadhan, Pungsaban, Simantonnoyon and Shoshyontihom would be held for the welfare of the baby. After the birth Jatakarma, Niskromon, Namkoron, Poustikkarma, Annoprashona and many other practices would be followed.

There was strong influence of scriptures on the daily life of the Hindus of Bengal. The prescriptions of the scriptures at which hour which foods and actions are prohibited, at which hour fasting is to be done and which times are auspicious for marriage, study, overseas travel, pilgrimage were strictly followed.

In those days Bengalee men had no fame; they were known as belligerent and arrogant. But Bengalee women had fame. They would also receive education. In the educated society honor of mother and wife was placed high. In that age there was no system of veil. Bengal women did not have any individuality or freedom. Taking only one wife was a general practice. But polygamy was in vogue among men. Many wives had to live their life with other co-wives.



Widows were considered as extreme curse of life. There would be no more vermillion on their forehead and with that they had to give up cosmetics and ornaments. Widows had to give up luxury and maintain austerity eating non-protein foods. The system of co-death was also in vogue in that age. That is, if the husband died, the wife also would be put on the pyre and roasted to death. Women in ancient Bengal did not have any legal rights on wealth and riches. But in absence of husband a childless widow could demand the whole property of her husband.

We can know about the high ideals of the moral life in the ancient scriptures of Bengal. In one hand, truthfulness, sanctity, kindness, charity etc. All types of qualities have been appreciated very much ; on the other hand, killing men, drinking, stealing, going to another man's wife etc. have been considered great sins, and there has been an arrangement of atonement and punishment for that. It is difficult to say that how much this ideal would be followed. But in social life there are evidences of some instances of corruption and obscenity.

## questions for Practice

### Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which world famous cloth would be produced in Bengal from ancient time?
  - a. Rayon
  - b. Silk
  - c. Maslin
  - d. Woolen
2. The economy of ancient Bengal is called agro-based because during this time ----
  - i. the staple crop of Bengal was paddy
  - ii. Bengal had fame for sugarcane, cotton, and betel production
  - iii. main cash crop was jute

Which one of the following is correct?

- a. i
- b. ii
- c. ii and iii
- d. i and iii

### Read the stimulant and answer the questions 3 and 4:

Kabita went to visit the Shalban Vihara in Comilla with her parents during summer vacation. There he noticed that the central temple was on a high mound in the middle of the Vihara, there were many rooms around for Buddhist monks and there was terracotta drawing on the walls. All the things together was an excellent ancient testimony.

3. Which testimony of ancient Bengal is in harmony with the traits of the testimony of ancient Bengal?
  - a. of Ashrafpur of Dhaka
  - b. of Jheuwari of Chittagong
  - c. of Paharpur of Nonagoan
  - d. of Bahularar of Bankura

4. The traits that are noticed in the said ancient testimony are -
- made by the Buddhists
  - a place of acquiring knowledge
  - having great fame home and abroad

Which one of the followings is true?

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| a. i and ii   | b. i and iii      |
| c. ii and iii | d. i, ii, and iii |

### **Creative Questions:**

- Tina has come to visit her village home on the occasion of her friend's elder sister Neela's marriage. Neela's father is a prosperous businessman of the village. He exports cotton cloth, silk, medicine, fine rice to foreign countries. Many cottage industries have grown up in the village. Many necessary things are made in the village indeed. The people of the village still use pitchers and containers for cooking made of earth. There are still in the village sufficient agricultural land, meadows, markets, ports and ways for traffic movement. Tina is impressed at the idea that she has been able to come to such a village. On the day of marriage Tina has put on a cotton sari very nicely, lac-dye in the foot, 'kumkum' in the forehead, 'urna' on the head and put up hair in a bun. Rice, fish, meat, vegetables, curd and kheer have been served at the house of marriage. After the meal, betel was served with spice. After the end of marriage and feast, there was a small program of songs.
  - What is the name of the language of the Aryans?
  - How did Bengali language originate?
  - Which period of Bengal has the similarity with the foods and clothes described in the stimulant ? Explain.
  - 'The economic structure of Neela's village is the reflection of the then Bengal.' Do you agree to the statement? Justify your answer.
- Saurav Banarjee and Pradip Banik are two friends and live in the same city. Saurav's father deals in cloth. Tat sari of Tangail, silk and Jamdani sari of Rajshahi are sold at his shop. At present he is exporting cotton cloth and silk sari to foreign countries. Pradip's father deals in rice, sugar, salt, spices etc. He imports sugar and spices. One day Pradip went to Saurav's house and seeing his sister, he made a proposal of marriage of his elder brother with her. Saurav's parents regretted the proposal because Pradip's family was not of the same caste.
  - From when was the currency introduced in Bengal?
  - What was the condition of the people of ancient Bengal?
  - What aspect of the then society of Bengal is reflected in the attitudes of Saurav's parents towards the marriage proposal of his sister?
  - Do you think the obstacle standing on the way to the marriage of Pradip's elder brother is the obstacle to the progress of the then society of Bengal?

## Chapter- Five

### Political History of Bengal in the Middle Age (1204 A.D.-1757 A.D.)

The time when the Muslim rule started in Bengal is called the beginning of the Middle Age in Bengal. History requires certain epoch-making changes to pass from one stage to another. The fact that the Muslims conquered Bengal not only brought political changes, but also made revolutionary change in the life of the people of this country in different fields including society, religion, language, literature and art.

#### At the end of this chapter-

- □ We can point out the significant aspects of the establishment of Muslim rule in Bengal;
- We can identify the dynasty-wise rule in the Age of the Middle age and their political achievements;
- □ We can relate Afghan rule in Bengal and the achievement of the rulers;
- □ We can give an introduction to the Barabhuys in Bengal and their history;
- We can analyze the political aspects of the rule of the Subadars and Nawabs during the Mughal reign;
- We can be informed of the political history of the Muslim rulers in Bengal chronologically in the Middle Age.

#### Beginning of Muslim Rule in Bengal

##### **Ikhtiyar Uddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji.**

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Turkish hero Ikhtiyar Uddin Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji drew a close to the Sena rule in north and North-west part of Bengal and began the Muslim rule. He was the inhabitant of Garmoshi of Afghanistan or the modern mostly Doshot-i-Marg. In history he is mostly known as Bakhtiyar-Khalji. Very little is known about his lineage. He belonged to the Turkish race. The Khalji family and he was a soldier seeking fortune.

Bakhtiyar Khalji believed in his own ability. Leaving behind his beloved birth land he came to Ghazni in 1195 A.D. in search of a living. Here he tried to get himself enrolled in the army of Shihabuddin Ghorî but he failed. Bakhtiyar certainly must have failed to impress the army chief because of his short stature, long arm and ill-flavored appearance. Such physical features were regarded as inauspicious by the Turks. Being unsuccessful in Ghazni, Bakhtiyar appeared at the court of Qutubuddin, the Sultan of Delhi. He failed to get an employment this time also. Then he went to Badaun. The ruler of that place, Malik Hizbaruddin gave him appointment to his army on monthly salary. The ambitious Bakhtiyar however could not stay content to hold the post of a soldier with so meagre a salary. He left Badaun in a short time and went to Ajodhya. Under the ruler Husamuddin there he took up the task of supervision.

Being impressed with Bakhtiyar's courage and intelligence, Husamuddin awarded him two rent-free Parganes (sub-division of a corner of the present district of Mirzapur). Here Bakhtiyar found the key to his future prosperity, baggot and finally became his source of power. Gathering



went by boat to Bikrampur of Munshiganj district of East Bengal and he took shelter there. Within a while, the soldiers of Bakhtiyar who had fallen behind also came. Without let or hindrance Nadia and the adjacent areas came to the possession of the Muslims. The historians have differing opinions relating to the exact date of Bakhtiyar's conquest of Nadia. At present however 1204 is accepted as the year of Nadia conquest.

After this, Bakhtiyar left Nadia and advanced towards Lakhsmanabati (Gour). Taking possession of Laxsmanabati, he made it his capital. This Laxsmanabati came to be known as Laxsnauti during the Muslim period. After conquering Gour, Bakhtiyar moved to the further east and established his own authority in Barendra or East Bengal. It is to be mentioned here that Bakhtiyar became the head of an independent Kingdom after the conquest of Nadia but he could not establish his dominion in whole Bengal. In East Bengal, the right of Lakhsman Sen was unaffected. After his death his descendants ruled East Bengal some time more.

Two years after the conquest of Gour or Lakhnauti, Bakhtiyar went out on Tibet mission. This Tibet mission was the last military expedition of his life. But failing in this mission he went back to Devkota. Here he fell ill and reached a dying state in 1206A.D.. It is conjectured that an Ameer (rich noble man) named Ali Mardan Killed him.

" The name of Ikhtiyar Uddin Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji comes first in the history of Muslim rule in Bengal. The first establishment of Muslim rule in this country was due to his effort. This rule lasted almost more than five hundred years and a half (1201A.D.-1757A.D.). He was not satisfied merely taking possession of kingdoms. He also took proper steps to set up his administration in the conquered places. His role in promoting Islam and Muslim culture is of mention worthy. During his reign many Madrasahs, Muqtabas and Mosques were established.

### **History of Turkish Rule in Bengal**

Bakhtiyar Khalji initiated the Muslim rule in Bengal. The first stage of it was from 1204A.D. to 1338A.D.. It cannot be said that the rulers of this period were entirely independent. Some of them were Bakhtiyar's co-warriors, Khalji lords. Again, some were rulers of Turkish dynasty.

All of the rulers come to be the rulers of Bengal under the Delhi Sultans. Later, many of the rulers rebelled against Delhi and tried to be independent. Their rebellion did not succeed at last. It failed due to the attack by Delhi. This period of Muslim rule was plagued by rebellion and chaos. So, the historian Ziauddin Barani named Bangladesh as 'Bulgakpur' which means 'City of rebellion'.

After the death of Bakhtiyar Khalji, conflict ensued among his co-warriors regarding power. The names of his three co-warrior lords are known. They are Muhammad Shiran Khalji, Ali Mardan Khalji and Husamuddin Iwaj Khalji. It was thought by many that Ali Mardan Khalji was the murderer of Bakhtiyar Khalji. For this reason, Khalji Ameer and soldiers chose Muhammad Shiran Khalji as their leader. He was able to bring back some discipline. Ali Mardan Khalji was taken prisoner. Later on, Ali Mardan fled away and gained the co-operation of Qutubuddin, the sultan of Delhi. The reign at Shiran Khalji

lasted only one year. After this, Husamuddin Iwaj Khalji took the charge as the ruler of Devkota in 1208A.D. Ali Mardan Khalji came back being co-operated by Delhi. Iwaj Khalji willingly handed over power to him. Ali Mardan Khalji declared independence in 1210A.D. and changed his name to Alauddin Ali Mardan Khalji. He was a strict administrator. So, agitation against him increased on and on. The Khalji Maliks unitedly rebelled against him. He was killed by them.

Iwaj Khalji came to power for the second time. At this stage he adopted the new name Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Khalji and ruled Bengal as an independent Sultan. He was the Sultan of Bengal almost 15 years from 1212A.D. to 1227A.D..

### **Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Khalji**

Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Khalji was undoubtedly the best among the Khalji Maliks. He made effort to strengthen and stabilize the Muslim Kingdom of Bengal established by Bakhtair. He transferred his capital from Devakota to Gaur or Lakhnauti for the ease of administration. He built a fort named Basankote to strengthen the defiance for the capital. Lakhnauti standing on a river had the advantage of trade and commerce. Moreover, Iwaj Khalji perceived that the territory of the river in Bengal could not be extended with only the cavaliers. For this, a strong naval force was necessary. Naval force was also needed to sustain the rule of Bengal. So, it can be concluded that of all the Muslim rulers of Bengal, Iwaj Khalji laid the foundation of the naval force. Wide and deep trench was dug round the capital for its security. He dug many canals and built bridges to save Lakhnauti and adjacent places from the yearly flood. He built roads so that the soldiers could move and the commodity could be carried from one place to another easily. The construction of highway not only facilitated the administration of the kingdom and trade and commerce but it was also like a blessing to the people because it protected their house and corn-field from the yearly flood.

Giasuddin Iwaj Khalji can be regarded as a good administrator for the above activities. He also concentrated on the extension of his kingdom. The Hindu Kings of the neighbouring Kingdoms like Kamrup, Orissa, Banga (south-east Bengal) were compelled to send him tax. The Lakhnau city at southern border of Lakhnauti fell into the hand of the enemy but he was able to restore it later. Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Khalji received the letter of acknowledgement from the Abbasi Caliph Al-Nasir. During that time, no Muslim ruler was recognized as valid in Islam unless he got letter of acknowledgement from the Caliph.

Iltutmish, the Sultan of Delhi, never liked the extension of the power of the Muslim Kingdom in Lakhnau under Giasuddin Iwaj Khalji. But at the beginning of his reign, it was not possible for him to pay attention to Bengal before facing the immediate danger and problem. When the dangers were gone in 1224A.D., Sultan Iltutmish paid attention to Bengal. When in 1225A.D. both armies faced each other near the mountains of Munger or Shokreegoli, Iwaj proposed for treaty. It was agreed by both sides. Being pleased Iltutmish appointed Malik Alauddin Jani as the ruler of Bihar and kept Iwaj Khalji as the ruler of Banga. Then he went back to Delhi. But immediately after Sultan had returned to Delhi, Iwaj Khalji again declared independence. Through the attack on Bihar, its ruler Alauddin Jani was driven out. Coming



back to Lakhnauti, Iwaj Khalji could realize that Iltutmish would attack Bengal again. He stayed in the capital for about one year with preparation and waited for counter attack. At this time the royal force of Delhi got engaged in suppressing the rebellion of Ajodhya. Iwaj Khalji thought that the Delhi soldiers were not in a position to attack Bengal in the circumstances. So, he decided to attack east Bengal in that situation. The capital Lakhnauti was unprotected, so to say, Meanwhile, Sultan Iltutmish directed his son Nasiruddin Mahmood to attack Lakhnauti. Taking advantage of Iwaj Khalji's absence, Nasiruddin Mahmood attacked Laxsnan, the capital of Banga. Hearing of the capital with a small member of soldiers. The enemy soldiers had already occupied his Basankota port. Iwaj Khalji was defeated in the battle and taken prisoner. Later he was killed. As a result of the defeat and fall of Iwaj Khalji, Banga was totally under the dominion of the Sultan of Delhi.

Iwaj Khalji was a patronizer of art and literature. Under his patronization, the Zuma mosque of Gour and several other mosques were built. During his reign, many Muslim Sufees and Saiyads from mid Asia took shelter in his court. These subees and gentlemen greatly co-operated in preaching Islam. Their presence and the patronization of Iwaj Khalji made Lakhnauti centre of Muslim education and culture. From after the death of Iwaj Khalji to 1287A.D., 60 years, Bengal remained a province of under the Muslim rulers of Delhi. During this time fifteen rulers ruled Bengal. Ten of them were slaves. The slaves were called 'Mamluk'. For this reason, the sixty years reign in Bengal is regarded as slave rule or Mamluk rule by many. But all these fifteen rulers belonged to the Turkish race. So, this period can be best termed as Turkish Age. During the Turkish reign there was internal trouble in Delhi. As a result, it was not possible for the Sultans to concentrate on the distant provinces like Bengal. So, the Turkish rulers of Bengal could rule pretty independently. The first Turkish ruler was Nasiruddin Mahmood. He was the son of Iltutmish, the Sultan of Delhi. As Nasiruddin died in 1229A.D., Daulat Shah-bin-Maudud was in power in Bengal for a short period. After the death of Sultan Iltutmish in 1236A.D., there was disturbance in Delhi. Taking advantage of this situation Aor Khan Aibeq seized power in Lakhnauti. But just after some time he had a defeat at the hands of the ruler of Bihar. Tughril Tushan Khan. Tughan Khan ruled Bengal for 9 years up to 1245A.D.. After this, Omar Khan was in power in Lakhnauti for only two years.

Jalaluddin Masud Jani ruled Bengal from 1247A.D. to 1251A.D.. He was able to bring peace in Lakhnauti. The next ruler was Malik Ikhtiar Uddin uezbak, the ruler of Ajodhya. He made territorial extension of his kingdom at the border area, Gathering sufficient strength Masud Jani assumed the title 'Mughisuddin' in 1255A.D. and declared independence. He was murdered in 1257A.D.. The next two years Malik Uzauddin uezbak ruled Lakhnauti independently. Later in 1269, the ruler of Kara province, Tajuddin Arsalan Khan came to the throne of Lakhnauti. After Arsalan Khan, Bengal was ruled by Tatar Khan. Although he showed loyalty to Delhi, the relation of Bengal with Delhi was cut off within a few years. Tatar Khan was followed by Sher Khan who was in power in Bengal for a short period of time.

The next ruler Tughril was the best among the Mamluk Turks. He took possession of quite several region of Dhaka and Faridpur beside north and west Bengal. He built a fort named Narkilla near Sonargaon. The fort was known to the common people as Tughril's killa. Tughril declared independence assuming the title 'Mughisuddin'. As a result, the Sultan of Delhi, Balban made a violent attack on Tughril. Tughril was defeated and killed by Balban in 1281

A.D. As the rulers used to revolt, this time Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan the Governor of Bengal. The next six years, Bengal was under Delhi.

In 1287 A.D., subsequent to the death of Balban, Bughra Khan had kept ruling Bengal independently. At this time, the son of Bughra Khan, Kaekobad was the Sultan of Delhi.

Bughra Kana got disheartened at the news of the death of Kaekobad. Setting his other son Rukanuddin Kaekaus to the throne of Bengal, he himself pulled out of the situation. Kaekaus ruled Bengal for ten years (1291 A.D.-1300 A.D). As he had no son, the next ruler was Malik Firuz Itgin. As the Sultan he adopted the new name 'Sultan Shamsuddin Firuz Shah'. After the death of Firuz Shah, his son Bahadur Shah succeeded to the throne of Bengal. Just after a short time, he was defeated and captured by the Sultan of Delhi Ghiyasuddin Tughlak. Later in 1325 A.D., Bahadur Shah was released and sent to Sonargaon. He was jointly appointed the ruler with Bahram Khan there. Nasiruddin Ibrahim and Kadar Khan were the governors of Lakhnauti. Izzauddin was appointed the governor of Satgaon. Ghiyasuddin Bahadur revolted in 1328 A.D. and hence he was killed by Bahram Khan. From that time to 1338 A.D., Bengal was under Delhi.

### **History of Independent Sultans Rule in Bengal**

The Sultans of Delhi could not keep Bengal under their power from 1338 A.D to 1538 A.D.. In the early years the army of the Sultans of Delhi made attacks. They tried to bring Bengal to their own possession. Being unsuccessful, they gave up at last. At that time there was little possibility of attack from outside. So, the Sultans of Bengal succeeded in ruling Bengal with freedom and ease. Although the beginning of independence in Bengal was made by Fakhruddin Mubarak, the Sultans of the Ilias Shahi dynasty brought stability to Bengal.

### **Independent Sultanate Reign (1338A.D.-1538A.D.)**

The ruler of Sonargaon Bahram Khan died in 1338. The keeper of armourer of Bahram Khan 'Fakhr', was a royal employee. He declared independence after his master's death and came to the throne of Sonargaon with the name 'Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah'. Thus began the independent sultanate period in Bengal. During this time Muhammad-bin-Tughlak of Delhi had no way to pay attention to the far-off Bengal. As a result, though the beginning of independence was in Sonargaon, the independent regions got extended more and more. No one could take away this independence in the next two hundred years.

The administrators of Delhi ruled in Lakhnauti outside Sonargaon at that time. They did not look favorably on the declaration of independence by Fakhruddin, Kadar Khan, the ruler of Lakhnauti and Izzauddin, the ruler of Satgaon, jointly attack Sonargaon. But they did not succeed. Kadar Khan was defeated and killed by the army of Fakhruddin.

Fakhruddin, as an independent Sultan, issued coin after his own name. According to the date engraved on his coin, it can be assumed that he ruled Sonargaon from 1338 A.D. to 1345A.D.. Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah extended his territory to some extent towards the South-east. It was he who conquered Chittagong first. It is known that Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah constructed a highway from Chandpur to Chittagong. Coins with the name

of Ikhtiar Uddin Gazi Shah engraved on them were issued from Sonargaon mint. Time up to 1352A.D. is found on the coins with the name of Gazi Shah, So it is understood that Fakruddin succeeded to the throne as the independent Sultan of Sonargaon after his father's death and ruled about three years till 1352A.D..

#### **Individual work**

1. Point out the causes of conflict between Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Khalji and the Sultan of Delhi Iltutmish.
2. Who established the Saltanate of Bengal? When and how did he do it?
3. Evaluate Sultan Shamsuddin Ilias Shah as the founder of Bengali nationalism.

### **Ilias Shah Dynasty**

When Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah was the independent Sultan in Sonargaon, Ali Mubarak, the commander-in-chief usurped the throne of Lakhnauti. Coming to the throne, he took on the little `Alauddin Ali Shah; He also established an independent kingdom in Lakhnauti. Later he shifted his capital to Pundna (Firozabad). Ali Shah was in power till 1342A.D.. Hazi Ilias was his Dudhbhai (a person considered someone's brother because he sucked at his mother's breast). He defeated and killed Ali Shah and he established a dynasty in Bengal. The name of this dynasty is Ilias Shah dynasty. Subsequently, the descendants of Ilias Shah ruled Bengal for a long time. Hindu kingdom flourished in the mid part and lasted for some time.

Ilias Shah became the head of North and North-west Bengal in 1342A.D. through taking possession of the throne of Firozabad. Sonargaon and Satgaon were still then beyond his rule. Ilias Shah had the dream to be the ruler of the whole of Bengal. He first paid attention to West Bengal. Satgaon was under his control before 1346A.D.. Nepal was attacked in 1350A.D. and much treasure was obtained. During this time, he conquered some part of Trihut or Bihar and took possession of a lot of riches and jewels. Orissa also came to his dominion. But the significant success of Ilias Shah was his taking possession of East Bengal.

Ikhtiar Uddin Gazi Shah was defeated by Ilias Shah in Sonargaon in 1352A.D.. As Sonargaon was occupied, the whole Bengal was conquered. So, Though Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah was responsible for the birth of independence in Bengal it was Ilias Shah who established the actual independence in 1352A.D.. Ilias Shah also conquered some parts outside Bengal namely Shamparon, Gorakhsapur and Kashi. He conquered some part of Kamrupa as well. The bottom line is that his territory extended from Assam to Varanasi. Cutting off the tie with Delhi, Ilias Shah included his name in 'Khutba Path' (recitation from the religious books) and issued coins with his name on them. This made Sultan Firuz Shah much disgruntled. In the beginning the Sultan of Delhi did not accept this liberty of Bengal. Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlak led a war against Ilias Shah from 1353A.D. to 1354A.D.. His effort was directed at subjecting Bengal to Delhi. But he failed. Ilias Shah took shelter in the impenetrable Ekdala fort. On the other hand, there was little possibility of victory in the rainy season. So, Firuz Shah accepted the independence of Bengal through treaty and established friendly relation with Ilias Shah. Then he returned to Delhi.

As a ruler Firoj Shah was sagacious and popular. His kingdom had peace and discipline during his reign. There was amity between Hindus and Muslims. He built a city named Hazipur. It was he constructed a hamman in Firuzabad. Architecture and cultural activities got much patronization during this period. He was a devoted Muslim. He greatly respected saints and mendicants. Saint Sirajuddin, Sheikh Biabani, Alwal Huq admired his court.

Although Ilias Shah occupied Bengal as the ruler of Lakhnauti, he established a greater Bengal joining the two lands. Since this time, all the inhabitants of Bengal came to be known as Bengali. Ilias Shah received the titles 'Shah-i-Bengala' and 'Shah-i-Bengali'.

After the death of Shamsuddin Ilias Shah, his son Sikandar Shah (1358A.D.-1393A.D.) came to the throne of Bengal. He was an efficient and powerful ruler like his father. Delhi's Sultan Firoz Shah again attacked Bengal from 1358A.D. to 1360A.D.. But Firoz Shah Tughlak failed this time as well. Sikandar Shah also had to take shelter in the Ekdala fort like his father. Conflict was resolved through treaty between the two sides. According to the conditions of the treaty, Zafar Khan was given the administrative power in Sonargaon. But Zafar Khan refused this post. He also returned to Delhi with Firoz Shah Tughlak. The authority of Sikandar Shah in Sonargaon and Lakhnauti remained as it was before. The independent sultanate rule which Ilias Shah had established, was set on a stronger footing by Sikandar Shah.

After the death of Sultan Sikandar Shah, his son Ghiyasuddin assumed the title 'Azam Shah' and succeeded to the throne (1393A.D.-1411A.D.). Ilias Shah and Sikandar Shah showed their efficiency in warfare and defending independence. But Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah's achievements were different. He gained fame for his pleasing personality liked by his subjects. He established a friendly relation with the king of Jaunapur, Khan Jahan. The Chinese emperor Ianglo sent delegates to his durbar (court). In return he also sent to the Chinese Emperor rich gifts as a token of regards. The main point is that although Azam Shah did not engage himself in any war, he was able to sustain the vast kingdom built by his father and grandfather. Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah was a righteous judge. A brilliant story about his justice is related in the book 'Riaz-us-Salateen'.

Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam was well-reputed to be a great scholar. He admired and respected the poets and writers. He was fond of poetry and he himself composed poems in Persian. He used to communicate through letters with the famous Persian poet Hafiz.

Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah has a special place in the history of Bengal for developing Muslim education and culture and the patronization of Bengali literature. It is in his reign that the first Muslim Bengali poet Shah Muhammad Sageer composed the poem 'Yusuf-Julekha'. During the reign of Azam Shah, famous Sufi devotee Nur Qutub-ul-Alam set his abode in Pandua. From this place he moved around to preach Islam.

As a result Pandua had the good reputation to be the centre of Islamic education and culture in India. He received all kinds of help from the religious Sultan. The Sultan also spent money to build mosques and madrasas in Mecca and Medina. Despite some faults and failures in certain fields, Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah was one of the best Sultans of Bengal and he was the last Sultana of Ilias Shah dynasty. Since his death, fall of this dynasty began.

### **King Ganesh and Habsee Reign**

It is generally said that the two hundred years (1338A.D.-1538A.D.) is the period of independent reign of the Muslim Sultans. Yet some time in the mid part of this two hundred years there was a little break. After the death of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah, his son Saifuddin Hamza Shah came to the throne. But at that time there was conspiracy among the aristocrats about seizing power. Having ruled one year, he was murdered by his slave Shihabuddin in 1412A.D.

Being the Sultan, Shihabuddin adopted the name `Shihabuddin Byazid Shah; But after two years (1414A.D.-1415A.D.) he was killed by the conspirators. Taking advantage of this situation, the Hindu aristocratic king Ganesh seized power in Bengal.

The Sultans of Bengal appointed the Hindus to most of the high posts. King Ganesh was a high-ranking courtier of Azam Shah. It is known that Ganesh was at first a king of Vatulia region in Dinajpur. He got an employment in the court of the Sultan. Just after having the employment, he started to gather strength secretly. His desire was to turn out the Muslims and established the Hindus in power. With this very aim he came to power uprooting the Ilias Shah dynasty. Ganesh killed many suftee devotees. The leader of the Muslim saints Nur qutub-ul-Alam appealed to the Sultan of Jaunapur. Ibrahim Sharki to protect the Muslims. As Ibrahim Sharki came to Bengal equipped with army, Ganesh was terrified. At last he made a compromise with the Muslim saint Nur Qutub-ul-Alam. As per the conditions Ganesh converted his son Jadu into Muslim and left the throne of Bengal to his son. After Jadu had become a Muslim, his name was Jalauddin Mahmud. Sultan Ibrahim Sharki set Jamaluddin to the throne and returned to his own land Jaunapur.

Ganesh came to the throne twice. First time he was in power only for a few months. About the middle of 1415A.D. Ibrahim Sharki placed Jalauddin Mahmud Shah to the throne. As Ibrahim Sharki returned, Ganesh felt secured. With many rites and rituals, he again converted his son to Hindu, Ganesh died in 1418A.D.. After the death of king Ganesh, the Hindu courtiers placed Mahend Dev, son of Ganesh, to the throne of Bengal. But in no time Jalaluddin ousted Mahendradev and came to the throne for the second time. At this stage he was uninterruptedly in power till 1431. During the time of this very competent administrator, the territory of Bengal had great extension. The whole Bengal, parts of Tripura and south Bihar except Arakan were within his kingdom.



at least for some time. Coins with his names were issued from various mints of his kingdom. He shifted his capital from Pandua to Gaur. After the death of Jalaluddin Mahumud Shah, his eldest son Shamsuddin Ahmad Shah succeeded to the throne. Falling a victim to the plot of the courtiers, he was murdered by the slaves Sadi Khan and Nasir Khan. Thus the reign of king Ganesh and his descendants came to an end.

#### **Individual work**

1. Prove the fact that Sultan Gaisuddin Azam Shah was a patronizer of education and culture.
2. Analyse the causes of the rise of king Ganesh.

#### **Rule of the Later Ilias Shah Dynasty**

After the death of Shamsuddin Ahmad Shah, his murderer, slave Nasir Khan came to the throne of Bengal. But the aristocrats who instigated Nasir Khan to kill Ahmad Shah, did not take kindly to his ascending the throne. Probably the authority of a slave was humiliating to them. So they united and killed Nasir Khan.

After the death of Nasir Khan, the throne of Gour remained empty for time. Ahmad Shah had no son. Then the aristocrats placed on the throne of Gour a descendant of Ilias Shah named Mahmud in 1452 A.D.. He is known as Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah in history. Thus the descendants again began an independent rule. So this period is called 'Later Ilias Shah period'; Nasiruddin was a skilled commander-in-chief and just ruler. During the reign of Nasiruddin Mahmud, Jessore and Khulna areas were included in the Muslim kingdom. West Bengal, East Bengal, North Bengal and parts of Bihar were within his kingdom. He also issued coins with his own name.

Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah died in 1459 A.D., Then his son Rukanuddin Barbak Shah succeeded to the throne of Bengal. Since his father's reign, Barbak Shah proved himself an efficient ruler. At that time he was the ruler of Satgaon. During his reign, the territory of Bengal got much extension. It is known that Barbak Shah had conflict with Kamrupa Kingdom. But it cannot be definitely said about what the result was. The northern part of the Ganges was within his territory. During his reign, Vagolpur came under Muslim rule. But the districts to the west of Munger were under the authority of the ruler of Jaunapur, Mahmud Shahi. It is assumed that this place was conquered during his time. There was trouble about the authority of Chittagong. It was under Arakan kingdom towards the beginning of Barbak Shah's reign. But Barbak Shah restored it towards the end. Jessore and Khulna were under his authority. He also extended his territory towards the south.

It was Barkan Shah who first gathered innumerable Abisinian slaves (Habsee slaves) and appointed them to military posts and to important posts of the places. The number of these appointed slaves was eight thousand. Probably he made a group of these Habrees in order to form his own party. But this step taken by him jeopardized the Kingdom.



Sultan Rukanuddin Barbak Shah was a great scholar. In many of his stone inscriptions his name and different royal appellations including 'Al-Fazit' and 'Al-kamil' are found. Those prove that Barbak Shah attained the highest appellation in the field of education. He was not only a scholar but also a patron of learning and literature. He patronized the learned and the scholars of both Hindus and Muslims. Brihashpati Misra was the author of the books *Getagobindatika*, *Kumarsamvadtika*, *Raghubangshatika* and so on. Maladhar Basu who composed the famous Bengali poem 'Shreevrishna Bijoy', was one of the best scholars of this period. Krittibas, the composer of Bengali Ramayan attained the favour of Barbak Shah. Probably Bader also got the patronization of Barbak Shah. Among the Muslim poets and authors of this time, Ibrahim Kayum Faruki, Ameer Joynuddin Havaee, Ameer Shihabuddin Kirmance and Mansur Shivajee deserve special mention. Barbak Shah helped the poets and writers in many ways. That he was a king of liberal and non-communal outlook is proved by the fact that he patronized the Hindu poets and scholars and appointed many Hindus to the high posts of the royal court. In his regard, a ruler of liberal mind like Barbak Shah is rare not only in the history of Bengal but also of India.

Barbak Shah was a true lover of beauty. It was Barbak Shah who constructed the massive and beautiful arch known as 'Dakhil Darwaza' in Gour. At this time two mosques were built in Mirzagaon of Chittagong and Patuakhali districts. In the light of these activities, Barbak Shah can be considered the best among the Sultans of Bengal.

Barbak Shah passed away in 1474 A.D. Then his son Shamsuddin Abu Muzaffar Yusuf Shah (1474 A.D.-1481 A.D.) became the Sultan of Bengal. The vast kingdom built by his father and grand father was unimpaired during his time. His territory was extended up to Urisyain the west and Sylhet in the east.

The death of Yusuf Shah was followed by his son Sikandar Shah on the throne. As he fell ill, he was dismissed. Barbak Shah's younger brother Hussain took on the title 'Jalauddin Fateh Shah' and came to the throne (1481 A.D.-1487 A.D.). He issued coins in his own name. But at this time, there was trouble in the royal court. The Habsee slaves became very powerful at this time. Jalauddin Fateh Shah tried to curb their strength. This made all the Habsee slaves begin a conspiracy against the Sultan untidily. Sultan Shahjada was the head of the palace guards. Through temptation, the slaves persuaded Sultan Shahzada and his subordinate foot soldiers to join their group. Shahzada killed Fateh Shah inside the palace. With the murder of Fateh Shah, the reign of Ilias Shahi dynasty in Bengal came to an end. Thus the reign of the Habsees began in Bengal.

**Individual Work :** Find out the step taken by Sultan Rukanaddin Barbak Shah which was beneficial to his kingdom.

### **Habsee Rule**

The Habsee rule in Bengal lasted only six years (1487 A.D.-1493 A.D.). The history of this country during this period abounds with wrongs, injustice, revolt, conspiracy and disappointment. All the three of the four Habsee Sultans of this period were murdered.

Habsee leader Sultan Shahzada adopted the title 'Barbak Shah' and began to rule Bengal first. But within a few months, he was killed by Habsee commander-in-chief Malik Andil. Malik Andil assumed the title 'Saifuddin Firuz Shah' and came to the throne. Only his three years' reign (1487 A.D.-1490 A.D.) was a little pre-eminent in the history. His death was followed by the second Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah. But after a short rule (1490 A.D.-1491 A.D.), he was killed. A Habsee leader killed him and came to the throne with the name 'Shamsuddin Muzaffar Shah' (1491 A.D.-1493 A.D.). He was notorious as a tyrant and killer. Consequently the aristocrats of Gaur revolted against Muzaffar Shah. Syad Hossain, an adviser of Muzaffar Shah joined the rebels. At last Muzaffar Shah was killed. With his death the Habsee rule in Bengal ended.

### **Hossain Shahi Dynasty**

Getting rid of Habsee rule, Syad Hossain came to the throne of Bengal. As he became the Sultan, he took on the title 'Alauddin Hussain Shah'. These the rule of a new dynasty named 'Hussain Shahi dynasty' began in Bengal. Of the reigns of the independent Sultans of Bengal, Hussain Shahi reign (1493 A.D.-1538 A.D.) was the most glorious period.

Sultan Alauddin Hussain Shah was the best Sultan of the Hussain Shahi period. He belonged to the Syad family of Arabia. he came from Mecca to Bengal with his father Syad Ashraf-al-Hussain and brother Yusuf. he first set his adobe in the village chandpara of Rar. Later, Hussain Shah went to the capital Gaur and got employment under Muzaffar Shah. Then he became an adviser, Thus he came to power in Bengal.

There was anarchy and chaos in the Kingdom since Alauddin Hussain Shah ascended the throne. After taking up the responsibility of the kingdom, he engaged himself in bringing place and discipline. There was anarchy in the country due to the maladministration of the Habsee community. They had the main role in the murder of every Muslim. Coming to the throne, Hussain Shah gave directions to the the Habsee to stop such activities.

But as they disobeyed his order, he gave commands to kill them. This severe measure taken by Hussain made twelve thousands Habsees lose their lives. The rest of the Habsee were driven out of the kingdom.

The next step of Alauddin Hussain Shah was to diminish the power of the body guards, foot soldiers. This regiment of foot soldiers played the most vifal role in all the conspiracies of the palace. Hussain Shah dissolved the regiment of the foot soldiers. In their place, he formed a new regiment of guards consisting of aristocratic Hindus and Muslims.

Alauddin Hussain Shah tried to make politics and social systems free from Habsee influence for the welfare of the kingdom and he also strengthened the administration by shifting the capital. he shifted his capital to a place near Gaur. Of all the Sultans, only by established his capital in a place other thar in Pandua and Gaur. Severe measures were taken to punish the aristocrats and courtiers who tried to make disturbance during the Habsee rule. All the appressive servants with low birth were dismissed. On the other hand, he appointed the Syads, Mongols. Afthans and Hindus to different important and high posts of the administration. These measures being taken, within short time the kingdom saw place and discipline.

During the time of Alauddin Hussain Shah, the boundary of Bengal got maximum extension. He conquered Kamrup nad kamta. Some parts of Urishya and Tripura also came to his possession and so came some part of south Bihar. He drove out the Arakaniass from Chittagong. At this time he resisted the attack on Bengal made by the Sultan of Delhi Sikandar Lodi. Only in Assam mission, he was unsuccessful. Hussain Shah succeeded in ensuring all kinds of security in his vast kingdom. He ruled long twenty six years (1493 A.D.-1519 A.D.). This great sultan ruled this long period of time with success and died in 1519 A.D..

Alauddin Hussain Shah was a good administrator and a far-sighted politician. He showed great enthusiasm, sincerity and prudence in reshaping his administrative system and public welfare. He realized that conquering kingdom is not the final thing for the king but a time-suiting and justice-based administrative system was essential. He was impartial in respect of race and religion in his administration and protection of his subjects. His object was to establish a well-organized, impeccable and benevolent administration by promoting a loving and friendly relation between the Hindus and the Muslims. For this reason, despite being a conservative sunnee, he appointed different Hindus to administrative posts according to their merit. He also awarded different appellations to the Hindus to encourage them. This magnanimity of Hussain Shah to the Hindus was effective for good administration and helped the Bengalis to build their own tradition. It is also a testimony to his political far sightedness. This religious broadmindedness of Hussain Shah also inspired his descendants. During his peaceful reign, his subjects lived in peace and happiness.



Pic: Sree Chaytanna

The effort of Hussain Shah to create a relation of amity between Hindus and Muslims also made an impact on the social life of the people of that time. During his time, appeared Sree chaytanna, the founder of the Vishnu religion. He showed a liberal attitude to him and directed his men to co-operate with him. Worship to the sattyapeer (true saint) was another significant incident of the Hussain Shah's reign. Worship of the sattyapeer was a brilliant effort at the establishment of amity between Hindus and Muslims.

The development and manifestation of Bengali literature had made Hussain Shah's reign immortal. His generous patronization undoubtedly increased the splendor of Bengali literature. Hussain Shah gave the talented poets and authors awards in order to encourage them. Of the famous poets and writers, Rup Goswami, Sanatan Goswami, Maladhar Basu, Bijoygupta, Bipradas, Paragal Khan and Yashoraj Khan are mention worthy. They wrote numberless books with the patronization of Hussain Shah. Their literary achievements attained by indefatigable efforts have enriched the history of Bengal. During this time Maladhar Basu translated 'Shree Madvagabata' and 'Puran', and Paraneswar 'Mahavarat' into Bangli. Alauddin Hussain Shah was also a generous patronizer of Arabic and Persian languages.

Hussain Shah was a devoted Muslim. He had infinite sincerity and devotion to his own religion and the Sufi saints. Countless mosques were built in different places of the country. Of these mosques, 'Choto Sona Masjid' of Gaur is notable. Many 'Khankash' and Madrasas were built in the Kingdom for the development of Islamic culture. Hussain Shah spent a lot of money for the preservation of the shrine of the Muslim saint Qutub-ul-Alam of Pandua. Hussain Shah constructed a citadel and an arch in Gaur, a school and a bridge in Maladaha. These mosques, Madrasas, citadel, arch bear testimony to Hussain Shah's love of architecture. During his twenty six years' reign, knowledge and science and arts had astonishing development in Bengal. For this reason, his reign is called the 'Golden Period' in the history of Muslim rule in Bengal.

After the death of Alauddin Hussain Shah, his eldest son Nusrat Shah, adopted the title 'Nasiruddin Abul Muzaffar Nusrat Shah' (1519 A.D.-1532 A.D.) and came to the throne of Bengal. Being impressed with his efficiency, Hussain Shah during his own reign handed over some powers to Nusrat Shah. Coming to the throne also he was able to show skill like his father. At this time, the whole Bihar was under his dominion. During his time the Mughal empire was established in India. The first Mughal emperor of Babur sent troops for expedition to Bengal. At first Nusrat Shah made friendly relation with Babur. Later when there was war, he kept the throne of Bengal by making treaty. Nusrat Shah was killed by miscreants in 1531 A.D.

Sultan Nusrat Shah was a noteworthy ruler of his time. He was patient and kind to his people. He dug wells and ponds in many places of this Kingdom to remove the water problem of his subjects. The 'Mitha Pukur' (sweet pond) bears the hallmark of the achievement till today. The human qualities of Nusrat Shah made him popular to his subjects. The Hindus also received justice in his kingdom. The amity between the Hindus and the Muslims was a characteristic of this time. In this regard, he kept his father's achievement untarnished. Many of the architectural work during Nusrat Shah's reign show his enthusiasm and patronization in the fields of arts and culture. He constructed a platform in a cell of the famous 'Kadam Rasul' building of Gaur. A black marble altar with artistic design and the footprint of Hazrat Muhammad (sm) was set on it. The famous 'Bara Sona Masjid' or 'Baraduari Masjid' was a work of his time. Nusrat Shah built a monument in memory of his father near Gaur. He constructed two mosques in Mongolokota city of Burdwan district and in a place named Bagha in Rajshahi. The foundation of the glorious shrine of the great saint Makhdum Akhi Sirajuddin in Sadullapur is another example of his great achievements.

The great poet Parameshwar translated part of Mahavarata into Bengali following the orders of Nusrat Shah. During his reign, Shreekar Nandi translated into Bengali Ashwamedha chapter of Mahavarat. Shreedhar also translated Mahavarata into Bengali. Nusrat Shah also set up libraries in different parts of the country to expand knowledge and learning.

The next Sultan of Bengal was Alauddin Firuz Shah, son of Nusrat Shah. He was in power for about one year. Since the time of Nusrat Shah, Bengal had conflict with the kingdom of Ahom. It continued in the time of Firuz Shah. Since the time of Nusrat Shah, the fall of the independent Sultanate began. The descendants of Nusrat Shah were weak. His younger brother Ghiyasuddin Mahmud Shah killed his brother's son

Firuz Shah 1533 A.D. and ascended the throne. But this brought no change to the situation. Rather the decay which began in the kingdom of Nusrat Shah, during his reign was rounded off during the reign of Mahmud Shah. The significant incident of his five years' rule was his conflict with the Afghan leader Sher Shah Shur. At last when Sher Shah took Bengal in 1538 A.D., the independent sultanate era of two hundred years in Bengal came to an end.

**Individual work:** Ascertain the truth of the statement that the liberal attitude of Alauddin Hussain Shah to his administrative policies was beneficial to his country.

**Group work :** Make a list of works for public good and the works of architecture during the reign of Sultan Nusrat Shah.

### **Afghan Rule and the Barabhuysians (1538 A.D.-1576 A.D.)**

As the independent sultanate era in Bengal came to an end, foreign powers gradually grabbed up Bengal. The Mughal emperor Humayun established his authority in Bengal for some time. But at last he had to accept the defeat at the hands of the Afghan leader Sher Shah. Bengal and Bihar straightaway came to the authority of the Afghans. The two sects of the Afghans, namely Shur Afghan and Karrani. Afghan ruled Bengal for quite some time. At last the Mughal Emperor Akbar snatched away the power of Bengal from the Afghans. Although the Mughals occupied the capital, they failed to establish actual power inside Bengal. During this time there were many powerful independent Zamindars in Bengal. These Zamindars Known as Barabhuysians could not accept the Mughal authority. During the time of emperor Akbar, the Mughal Subadars tried to suppress these Zamindars but failed. The Barabhuysians were suppressed in the time of Jahangir.

### **The Afghan Rule**

Mughal emperor Babur and his son Humayun tried to bring Bengal under the Mughal authority, since the later part of the Hussain Shahi period. But the Mughals could not attain this object in the beginning because of the Afghans. Emperor Humayun got involved in a war with the Afghan leader Sher Khan Shur. Hasan Khan, father of Sher Khan, was a fief-holder in Sasaram area of Bihar. After his father's death he got appointed as a fief-holder. At this time the fief-holder Jalal Khan of Bihar was a minor and so Sher Khan took his guardianship.

Sher Khan had the dream to be the head of whole India. So, he secretly kept increasing his strength. With this aim in view, Sher Khan took possession of the strong fort of Chunar and Bihar. In 1537 A.D., he attacked Gaur, the capital of Bengal twice. This time the Mughal emperor Humayun became alert. He chased after Sher Khan and took Gaur, the capital of Bengal. Being charmed with the wonderful palace and the natural beauty of Gaur, Humayun named it 'Jannatbad'. The emperor grounded himself in amusement in Gaur for six months. In these circumstances, Sher Khan kept on increasing his strength. A message from Delhi informed him that Humayun's step brother Hindal was plotting to occupy the throne. Having received this message, Humayun started for Delhi. Sher Khan utilized this opportunity. He lay in wait in Chausa near Buxar. As Humayun reached this place near the Ganges. Sher Khan jumped on him. The unprepared Humayun was defeated (1539 A.D.).



Defeating The Mughal emperor Humayun, Sher Khan took on the title 'Sher Shar'; He declared himself the independent Sultan of Bihar. Now he paid attention to Bengal. In 1540 A.D. he defeated the Mughal ruler Ali Kuli and occupied Bengal. And this year he finally defeated Humayun in the battle of Bilgram near Kanauj and occupied the throne of Delhi. Thus after a long time, Bengal was again under the rule of Delhi, The empire of Sher Shah included the whole Bengal upto Chittagong and Sylhet. As Sher Shah belonged to the Shur dynasty, the rule of Bengal at this time was the rule of Shur Afghan dynasty.

After the death of Sher Shah, his son Jalal Khan adopted the name 'Islam Khan' and succeeded to the throne of Delhi. He ruled eight years (1545 A.D.-1553 A.D.). But after the death of Islam Khan, his minor son Firooz Khan came to the throne and immediately there was grouping in the Shur dynasty. The nephew of Sher Khan, Mubariz Khan killed Firuz Khan and adopted the name, 'Muhammad Adil' and came to the throne of Delhi.

Bengal at this time was not detached from the political events of the Indian subcontinent. So, just after the death of Islam Khan, the Afghan rule of Bengal, Muhammad Khan Shur declared independency. He assumed the title. 'Muhammad Shah Shur'. Since this time Bengal was independent for the next twenty years. In order to extend territory in North Indian, Muhammad Shah Shur engaged himself in a contest with Adil Shah Shur. Conquering Jaunapur, he advanced towards Agra. But at the final stage he was defeated and killed.

As Muhammad Shah Shur killed the emperor of Delhi Adil Shah appointed Shahbaz Khan the ruler of Bengal. Muhammad Shah's son khizir Khan was staying at Alahabad at that time. Immediately after hearing the news of his father's death. he adopted the title 'Giasuddin Bahadur Shah' and declared himself the independent Sultan of Bengal. After a few days he defeated Shahbaz Khan and came to the throne of Bengal.

During this time, the political situation in Delhi become much complicated. Exploiting the weakness of Sher Shah's descendants, Sultan Humayun restored his own kingdom. But although he established authority in Delhi, he got no chance to do the same in Bengal. After the death of Humayun, his son Akbar succeeded to the throne of Delhi and advanced to suppress the Afghan leaders of the Shur dynasty one by one. In the second battle of Panipath (1556 A.D.), Himu, the commander in-chief of Adil Shah, was defeated and killed by the Mughal soldiers. Adil Shah was much debilitated by this. Then he fled towards Bengal. On the way, he was defeated and killed by sultan Giasuddin Bahadur Shah in Fatehpur near Surajgar (1557 A.D.).

Afghan Sultan Giasuddin Bahadur Shah Conqueror of Bengal, when advanced towards Jaunapur and the Mughal commander Khan-i-Zaman barred his movement. The diplomatic Bahadur Shah made alliance with Khan-i-Zaman and returned to Bengal. After this, he did not make any expedition outside Bengal. He died in 1560 A.D.

After the death of Giasuddin Bahadur Shah, his brother Jalaluddin Shur took on the title 'Second Giasuddin' and succeeded to the throne of Bengal. Like his brother, he also maintained friendly relation with the Mughal. As he breathed his last in 1563 A.D., his only son ascended the throne of Bengal. But his name could not be Known. After he ruled for only there months, an Afghan leader named Giasuddin III killed him and came to the throne of Bengal. But he could not rule long either.



Taz Khan, the king of the Karrani dynasty killed Ghiyasuddin and established himself on the throne of Bengal. Taz Khan Karrani and Sulayman Khan Karrani were the commander of Sher Khan. Due to praiseworthy contribution the battle of Kanauj, Sher Shah gave them rent-free land in South Bihar. During the reign of Islam Khan. Taz Khan Karrani showed much efficiency as the commander-in-chief and diplomatic adviser. During the time of Firuz, the minor son and successor of Islam Shah, Taz Khan was appointed the Wazir. Killing Firuz, his maternal uncle Muhammad Adil Shur came to the throne. At this time, Taz Khan Karrani fled away and with the help of his brothers he established his dominion in South Bihar. In 1557 A.D., Taz Khan Karrani merely acknowledged loyalty to the Sultan of Bengal, Bahadur Shah Shur. After some time, he became totally independent.

He had also attention to the throne of Bengal. He was waiting for opportunity. When the unknown Ghiyasuddin occupied the throne of the Shur dynasty, taking advantage of the situation, Taz Khan and his brothers defeated and killed Ghiyasuddin and seized Gaur. Thus Taz Khan Karrani established the rule of the Karrani dynasty in Bengal.

After the death of Taz Khan Karrani in 1565 A.D., his brother Sulayman Khan Karrani became the Sultan of Bengal. This competent ruler included the Afghan leaders in his group. Thus many places of Bengal and Bihar became parts of his territory. He maintained good relationship with the Mughal Sultan Akbar, at the advice of his wise adviser Lodi Khan. First of all, he shifted his capital from Gaur, to Tanda situated 15 miles to the south-west of Maldaha. After the death of Sulayman Karrani in 1572 A.D., his son Bayazid ascended the throne. But within a short time, the Afghan leaders killed this tyrant Sultan. This time the second son of Sulayman Karrani. Daud Karrani came to the throne. He was the last Afghan ruler in Bengal. Daud Karrani was a very short-sighted ruler. Seeing the vast empire and abundant wealth, he thought himself equal to emperor Akbar. So far, the Afghan ruler of Bengal and Bihar openly expressed their loyalty to the Mughal emperors. But like an independent emperor, Daud adopted the title 'Badshah' (the king) and in chided his name in the recitation of the scriptures and issued coins with his own name on them.

The Afghans were already an enemy to the Mughals. On top of is, as Bengal and Bihar were not under the authority of the Mughals, emperor Akbar had no peace in mind. The behaviour of Daud Karajan gave Akbar the excuse to attack Bengal. First Akbar ordered the ruler of Jaunapur, Munim Khan to attack the Kingdom of Karrani. In the beginning Munim Khan did not make any direct attack. According to the suggestion of the adviser Lodi Khan, he kept friendly relation with Munim Khan. Following the advice of the adviser Lodi Khan, Daud Khan made a compromise with Munim Khan through riches and jewels. But in no time this situation changed. Following the advice of some conspirators, Daud misunderstood adviser Lodi. On his command, Lodi was killed. Bengal and Bihar were protected from the Mughals so far, because of the prudence of Lodi, Munim Khan had no more hindrance. After the death of Lodi, Munim Khan drove out the Afghans from Bihar in 1573 A.D. The Afghans had already become weak due to conflict within themselves. In such a situation Munim Khan advanced towards Bengal. The capital of Bengal during Karrani period was in Tanda. Leaving Tanda, the Afghans retreated and took shelter in Saptagram of Hoogli district. Occupying the capital, the Mughal soldiers also moved to Saptagram. Daud Khan fled to Urisa. Munim Khan established Mughal capital in Tanda. At this time, there was plague and many Mughal soldiers including

Munim Khan died of it. Consequently there was disturbance. Taking advantage of this situation, Daud Karrani took possession of West and North Bengal again. On the other hand, Zamindar of the low-lying region, Isha Khan drove out the Mughals from East Bengal. Leaving Bengal, the Mughal army took shelter in Bihar. As the news of Munim Khan's death reached Agra, emperor Akbar sent Khan Jahan Hussain Kuli Khan to Bengal as its ruler. King Todarmal was appointed his deputy. On the entrance to Bengal Daud Karrani resisted the Mughal army at Rajmahal. Muzaffar Khan Turbati, the ruler of Bihar, came forward to help the Mughals. There was a severe battle between the Mughals and the Afghans near Rajmahal in 1576 A.D. Daud Karrani suffered the final defeat in the battle of Rajmahal. Later he was sentenced to death. Thus the Karrani Afghan rule ended and Mughal rule began. But it is also true that the Mughal rule did not go far in the face of resistance made by the Bhuyians.

**Individual work :** Discuss how the Afghan rule was established in Bengal.

### History of Bhuyians

"Emperor Akbar could not establish his authority over the whole Bengal. The powerful Zamindars of Bengal did not accept the subjection by the Mughals. The Zamindars were independent in their own rule. They had powerful army and fleet. They used to attack the Mughal commanders unitedly to defend independence. These Zamindars are known as Bhuyians in the history of Bengal. This 'Bara' does not mean twelve. It is assumed that this 'Bara' refers to the countless number of Zaminders.

In the history of Bengal, the Bhuyians were from the middle of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century. In the time mentioned, those who struggled for freedom against the Mughals are called Bhuyians from the historical perspective. Besides this, there were many more less powerful Zaminders in Bengal. They also rebelled against the Mughals. But later they accepted the Mughal authority. The noteworthy Bhuyians are :

Name of Bhuyians	Name of Place
Isha Khan, Musa Khan	Most of Dhaka, almost whole Mymensingh district, some parts of the districts of Pabna, Bogra, Rangpur.
Chand Roy and Kedar Roy	Sherpur (Bikrampur, Munshiganj)
Bahadur Gazi	Bhawal
Sona Gazi	Sarail (at the northern border of Tripura)
Osman Khan	Bokainagar (Sylhet)
Veer Hamir	Bishnupur (Bakura)
Laxsman Manikya	Bhulua (Noakhali)
Paramananda Roy	Chandradeep (Barisal)
Vinod Roy, Madhu Roy	Chandrapratap (Manikganj)
Mukundaram, Satrajit	Bhushana (Faridpur)
Raja Kandarpa Narayan Ramchandra	Part of Barisal

At the beginning, the leader of the Bhuyians was Isha Khan. As the Hussain Shahi dynasty came to an end, Sulayman Khan, father of Isha Khan, established his zamindari (office of the Zaminder) in the locality of Sonargaon. Khizirpur fort was the centre of his strength.

Katrabu near Sonargaon and Khizirpur was his capital. After the fall of Daul Karrani, he established his capital in Sonargaon.

Emperor Akbar paid particular attention to suppress the Bhuyians. For this reason, he sent to Bengal Shahbaz Khan in 1583 A.D., Sadik Khan in 1585, Uzir Khan in 1586 and King Mansingha in 1594 A.D. as Subadar of Bengal. They were engaged in war in many times with Isha Khan and other small Zamindars. But it was not possible to defeat Isha Khan completely. As a return for his loyalty to emperor Akbar, he maintained his own authority. On the other hand, he declared independence against the Mughals and assumed the title 'Masnad-i-Ala';

As Isha Khan died in 1599 A.D., his son Musa Khan became the leader of the Bhuyians. Mansingha was sent to Bengal for the second time. This time Mansingha was successful to some extent. Musa Khan was defeated by Mansingha in a naval war in 1603 A.D.. But before having final victory, news of the illness of emperor Akbar came. Called by the emperor Mansingha returned to Agra.

After the death of emperor Akbar, his son Selim adopted the name 'Jahangir' and succeeded to the throne of Delhi. He again sent Mansingha to Bengal. After one year Qutubuddin Koka was appointed Subadar in Bengal in 1606 A.D. Qutubuddin was killed by Sher Afkhan. His successor Subadar Jahangir Kulikhan died after one year. After this, Islam Khan was the subadar of Bengal in 1608 A.D.

It was Emperor Jahangir's achievement to suppress the Bhuyians in Bengal and to establish Mughal rule. Subadar Islam Khan (1608 A.D.-1613 A.D.) deserves appreciation in this regard. Taking up the administration, he realized that if he could bring down the Baranuya leader Musa Khan, it would be easy to subdue the other Zamindars. For that reason, he decided to shift his capital from Rajmahal to Dhaka. It was because the strong hold of Musa Khan was at Sonargaon which was near Dhaka. In his way to Dhaka from Rajmahal, capital of Bengal, Islam Khan got the loyalty of many Zamindars.

Islam Khan built powerful fleet to face the Bhuyians. Fight with Musa Khan took place first in 1609 at Jatrapur, on the northern bank of river Korta. Musa Khan had fort here. In the battle, Musa Khan and other Zamindars retreated at last. In 1610 A.D. Dhaka became the capital to Bengal. According to the name of the Emperor, Dhaka was named as 'Jahangir Nagar'.

After this, the fleets of the Zamindars gathered again at Shitalakha river under the leadership of Musa Khan in order to resist the Mughals. Islam Khan sent army and fleet to different places of its western bank. A battle between Islam Khan and the Zamindars began in 1611 A.D. The forts including the Kadamt Rasul of Musa Khan on the eastern bank of the river came to the control of the Mughals. As the situation was adverse, Musa Khan went to Sonargaon. The capital as insecure, he took shelter in the Ibrahimpur Island of the Meghna river. The Mughal army took Sonargaon. This compelled the Zamindars to surrender. Finding no other way, Musa Khan was also forced to surrender to the Mughals at last. Like other Zamindars, Islam Khan also gave Musa Khan the charge in his Zamindar's estate under the Mughal authority. After this Musa Khan passed the rest of his life as the loyal fiefholder of the emperor. Being disheartened by the surrender of Musa Khan, other Zamindars accepted the authority of the emperor. Thus came to an end the rule of Bhuyians in Bengal.

<p><b>Group work :</b> Match the names of the Bhuyians with their places mentioned below.</p>
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Serial No	Name	Place
1.		

### **The Mughal Rule (1571 A.D.-1757 A.D.)**

The Mughal rule in Bengal passed in two phases namely Subadari and Nawabi. After the suppression of the Bhuyians the rule of the Subadar was established in the whole Bengal. The Mughal Provinces were known as 'Suba' Bengal was one of the Subas of the Mughals. The golden period of the Subadari rule was from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth century. After emperor Aurangazeb the Mughal rule became powerless during the time of the weak descendants of Delhi. In such a situation, the Subadars ruled Bengal independently. This period of the Mughal rule is known as the Nawabi era.

### **Reign of Subadars and Nawabs**

Suppressing the Bhuyians in 1610 A.D., Subadar Islam Khan established Subadari rule in the whole Bengal. After his death in 1613 A.D., quite a number of Subadars took power in Bengal. But no Subadar could play any important role until Subadar Mir Jumla took power of these, Islam Khan Chisti (1617 A.D.-1624 A.D.) and the brother of the empress of Delhi. Ibrahim Khan Fateh Jang (1617 A.D.-1624 A.D.) served as the subadars of Bengal. Then for a very short time, Darar Khan, Mahabbat Khan, Mukarram Khan and Fitai Khan were appointed Subadars.

After coming to power, emperor Shahjahan, appointed Kasim Khan Juini the Subadar of Bengal in 1628 A.D. Since the Hussain Shahi period the Portuguese engaged in trade in Bengal. During this time the influence of the Portuguese merchants greatly increased. Gradually it became a threat to Bengal. Kasim Khan Juini suppressed the Portuguese with an iron hand.

After Kasim Khan, Subadar Islam Khan Mashadi (1653 A.D.-1639 A.D.) ruled for four years. Then emperor Shahjahan sent his second son Shah Shuja to Bengal as Subadar. Shuja was in charge for twenty years. The reign of Shuja was more or less peaceful. Of the community of the foreign merchants, the Englishmen gained some extra advantages from the Subadar. It increased the strength of the Englishmen besides their trade. As the emperor Shahjahan fell ill in 1657. At this time, a conflict between Aurangazeb and Shah Shuja began. In the battle between the two brothers in 1659 A.D. Shuja was defeated. After defeat, he went to Arakan. He was killed later there along with his family.

The Shuja of Aurangazeb, Mir Jumla came up to Jahangirnagar, the capital of Bengal to Shuja. So, Emperor Aurangazeb appointed Mir Jumla the Subadar of Bengal (1660 A.D.-1663 A.D.). Although his success in his conflict with whom is not so significant, the conquest of Kuchbohar and Assam by Mir Jumla bears the stamp of his military talent. During his time, Kuchbihar entirely came under the Mughal empire. Through Assam expedition, he extended the border of the Mughal empire up to Assam.

After the death of Mir Jumla, first Dilir Khan and then Daud Khan ruled Bengal as the provisional Subadars. After that Aurangazeb's maternal uncle Shayesta Khan (1664 A.D.-1688 A.D.) was appointed Subadar of Bengal. Some time in 1678 A.D., the Emperor called him to come to Delhi. After that, he became the Subadar of Bengal for the second time.

Shaeysta Khan was an efficient commander and a farsighted ruler. He occupied Swandeeep and Chittagong and uprooted the Arakanian pirates. Subadar Shaeysta Khan established Mughal rule in Kuchbihar, Kamrup, Tripura and other places in an organized manner. Measures were also taken to ensure security in the border areas. In fear of him, the king of Assam did not dare to antagonize the Mughals. Toward the end of the Subadar rule, Shaeysta Khan had conflict with the English East India Company. The power of the English increased so much that they appeared to be a menace to this country. After efforts for long time, Shaeysta Khan drove out the English from Bengal. After Shaeysta Khan, Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur, Ibrahim Khan and Azimuddin became the Subadar of Bengal respectively. During their time, the history of Bengal was not very eventful.



Pic: Shaeysta Khan

Shaeysta Khan is memorable for his various public welfare activities during his reign. Innumerable inns, roads and bridges were built everywhere in his province. He made immense development in the fields of economy and agriculture in the province. He attained fame not only in Bengal but also in the whole Indian subcontinent for his benevolent administration. During his time, price of commodity was so cheap that eighty maund of rice cost only one taka.

The prosperity of economy of Bengal during the reign of Shaeysta Khan, was the expansion of industry and trade and commerce. Alongside of agriculture, there was sufficient development of industry and trade and commerce during this period. Shaeysta Khan encouraged the foreign merchants in trade and commerce.

The reign of Shaeysta Khan is particularly notable for architecture in Bengal. Various monuments, magnificent Dhaka of that time are a testimony to his profound love for architecture. This period can be termed 'the golden era' of the Mughals for the architectural development. Of the architectural constructions in his reign, Choto, Katra, Lalbagh Kella, Tomb of Bibi Pari, Hussaini Building, mosque of Safi Khan, Mosque of the Ganges, Chalk mosque and others deserve mention. The main point is that no other Subadar or ruler could leave behind so brilliant an image of himself like Shaeysta Khan. Practically, Dhaka was the city of Shaeysta Khan.

This time, Murshid Kuli Khan came to power in Bengal as an Subadar (1700 A.D.-1727 A.D.). First he was appointed the revenue collector of Bengal or Diwan. The function of the Diwan was to collect revenue of the Suba and control financial affairs. During the reign of emperor Farruk Shiyar, Murshid Kuli Khan was appointed the Subadar of Bengal. When Murshid Kuli Khan came to Bengal, the political and economic condition of Bengal was miserable. In the face of such a situation he tried to restore Mughal rule in Bengal with great courage. He changed the course of the history of Bengal by his personality, prudence and intelligence.



Pic: Murshid Kuli Khan



After the death of emperor Aurangzeb, the weak Mughal emperors could not pay much attention to the distant subas. As a result, the Subadars of those places ruled their provinces with some independence. Murshid Kuli Khan also became independent to some extent. He merely expressed loyalty to the emperor and sent one core three lakh taka revenue annually. After Murshid Kuli Khan, his son-in-law Sirajuddin succeeded to the throne of Bengal. Thus the Subadari, system of Bengal became hereditary. And in this way, the independent rule in Bengal again got established.

Since the time of Nawab Murshid Kuli Khan, the Suba of Bengal became almost independent. During this time, Suba was called 'Nizamat' and instead of Subadar the title was 'Nazim'. The post of Nazim became hereditary. Coming to the throne, the Subadars and Nazims of Bengal took an approval only from the emperor. So, the history of Mughal rule in Bengal during the eighteenth century is known as the period of the Nizams or Nawabs. And the rulers who were almost independent were known as 'Nawab'.

The reformation of the revenue system is the most memorable achievement of Murshid Kuli Khan. Surveying land, he fixed the revenue according to the ability of the tenants. He took proper steps to ensure and regularize revenue collection. With the help of the employees, he gathered correct information about the actual productivity of the land and business tariff. In this system, the middlemen could by no means harass the subjects.

Murshid Kuli Khan deeply felt the importance of the expansion of business and commerce for the economic development of the country. He encouraged the English, French and Persian business men irrespective of race or religion. He gave directives to his subordinates to ensure that the businessmen paid tariff as per convention and they were not treated unjustly in any way. The expansion of business and commerce of Bengal was due to his patronization. Calcutta, Chuchura and Chandannagar became a centre of business of the different foreign merchants.

Murshid Kuli Khan had no son. So, his daughter jinat-un-Nisa's husband Suzauddin Khan 1727 A.D.-1739 A.D. was appointed as the Subadar of Bengal by the emperor Farrukh Shiyar. With the dignity of an independent Nawab, Suzauddin came to the throne. He was a competent ruler. He was the Nawab of all the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and orissa. He gave high posts to his relatives and trustworthy people. He also made a good relationship with the Zamindars. But the last part of Sujauddin's life did not pass happily. Many of the palace officials made plot against him. But he faced the crisis with an expert hand. After the death of Sujauddin, his son Sarfaraz Khan became the Nawab of Bengal-Bihar-orissa. There was chaos all over the country due to his inefficiency. Taking advantage of this situation, the Naye-i-Nazim Alivardi Khan attacked Sarfaraz. Sarfaraz was defeated and killed. Alivardi Khan seized the power of Bengal not with the approval of the Mughal emperor but with his own might peace was established in Bengal during the reign of Alivardi Khan (1740 A.D.-1756 A.D.).

For a long time, the Marathi robbers known as Bargi had been attacking different parts of Bengal and plagued people's life. Resisting ten years which was from 1742 A.D.-1751 A.D., Alivardi Khan was able to drive out the Bargis from the country. As the Afghan army revolted during his reign he suppressed them with an iron hand. During the time of Alivardi, many European merchants including the English, carried on commercial activities in different parts of Bengal. At the same time, they went on gathering military power. Alivardi Khan strongly checked their initiatives.



Alivardi Khan chose the son of his youngest daughter Amena Begum, Sirajuddaula as his heir. The first daughter of Alivardi, Ghasheti Begum had the expectation that the son of her second sister Shaokat Jang would be the Nawab. Consequently, she started conspiracy against Sirajuddaula. Ghasheti Begum gained support of some aristocrats. Of them the names of Roydurlav, Mirjafar, Umichand, Rajballav and others can be mentioned. The shrewd English merchants who came to Bengal for trade, exploited this conspiracy inside the palace. They joined hands with conspirators. At last there was a battle between the Nawab and the English. On June 23, 1757 A.D. in the battle of Plassey, the commander-in-chief of the Nawab, Mirjafara treacherously desisted from taking part in the battle. Sirajuddaula helplessly suffered defeat. Thus through the battle of Plassey, the foundation of the English rule was laid in Bengal. And with it ended the Middle age in Bengal.

**Task :**

1. Mention what happened to Subadar Shah Suja at last ?
2. Mention the relics of architecture during the time of Subadar Shaeysta Khan.
3. Explain the role of Subadar Murshid Kuli Khan in establishing independent Nawabi rule.
4. Arrange chronologically the names of the following rulers :

Serial No.	Name of ruler	Names to be arranged chronologically
1	Islam Khan	
2	Iwaj Khalji	
3	Shayesta Khan	
4	Alauddin Hussain Shah	
5	Shamsuddin Illiyas Shah	

## Exercise

**Multiple Choice Questions :**

1. Who named Gaur as `Jannatabad'?
  - a. Sher Shah
  - b. Humayun
  - c. Jahangir
  - d. Akbar
2. In order to suppress the Barabhuysians, the strategy of Subadar Islam Khan was-
  - i. building powerful fleet
  - ii. shifting capital from Rajmahal to Dhaka.
  - iii. formation of cavalry

Which of the following is correct ?

- a. i and ii
- b. i and iii
- c. ii and iii
- d. i, ii and iii

**Read the following and answer questions 3 and 4 :**

The elected Chairman of Hajirhat, Mr. Noman is very popular, People of Hindu and Muslim communities live in his locality. Despite being a Muslim himself, he entrusted the Hindus too with different responsibilities as per their merit. This liberal attitude of him towards religion brought communal harmony in the area.

3. The lesson from which Sultan of the Middle age encouraged Mr. Noman in his work?
  - a. Alauddin Hussain Shah
  - b. Sikandar Shah
  - c. Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah
  - d. Alauddin Firaz Shah
4. As a result of the activities of those Sultans---
  - i. Study of literature got a new momentum.
  - ii. Short sighted politics began.
  - iii. the administrative works were done with skill.

**Which of the following is correct?**

- a. i
- b. i and ii
- c. i and iii
- d. i, ii and iii

**Creative Questions :**

1. Sohel was watching a movie on television about the war fought by the ancient Roman warriors. He saw that as a strategy of the war, the commander-in-Chief of one group was planning to attack by dividing the warriors into smaller groups. The commander-in-Chief very secretly took these warriors through the forest. Then they attacked the palace and reigned it.
  - a. Of which area of Dinajpur was king Ganesh the king?
  - b. Why is Illiyas Shah called the first proclaimer of Bengali nationalism in the history of the Muslim Bengal in the Middle age?
  - c. Which person's activities in the test book reflect the war strategy of the Commander-in-chief mentioned in the above passage ? Explain.
  - d. Do you think that although that man failed in different fields of life in the first stage of his life, fortune and diligence joined hands to bring success for him? Give arguments.
2. Haichari is a remote place of the hilly region. Communication system being hard there, it is difficult to market the commodity produced on time. There was a huge production of banana in the sloping lands of the hills. But it was not possible to market them on time. Watching the bananas sold at the cheapest rate, the school-going Durjoy Barur said to his mother, "Huh! It's the repetition of history", I see."
  - a. Who among the Muslim rulers in Bengal founded the navy army?
  - b. Why was Bengal called "Bulgakpur"?
  - c. Which ruler of the history of Bengal came to Durjoy's mind ? Explain.
  - d. Do you think it is reasonable to call the reign of that ruler 'golden period' of architecture?

## **Chapter Six**

### **Social, Economic and Cultural History of the Middle Age**

The ruling power came to the Muslims through the fall of Sen Dynasty and the conquest of Bengal by Ikhtiyaruddin Mohammad-bin Bakhtiar Khalji. As a result, the Middle Age of Bengal started. Before the arrival of the Muslims, people of Hinduism and Buddhism lived in Bengal. From the eleventh century Sufi saints started to come to Bengal to preach Islam. Many ordinary Hindus and Buddhists of Bengal were converted to Islam. Thus in Bengal an Islamic social structure started to form. In this age in Bengal Hindus and Muslims were living sides by side. As a result, ways of thinking, ideas and manners of each other started to get mixed. Thus the culture which flourished in Bengal is called Bengali culture.

**At the end of this chapter we will be able to:**

- explain the contributions of Sultan and Mughal rulers to socio-economic and cultural change in the Middle Age of Bengal;
- evaluate the contributions of Sultan and Mughal rulers to the flourishing of trade and commerce, architecture and fine arts in the Middle Age of Bengal;
- describe the religious condition of Bengal during Sultan and Mughal rule in the Middle Age;
- identify the contributions of Sultan and Mughal rulers to the origin and the flourishing of Bengali language and literature in the Middle Age;
- able to realize to the positive changes in the Bengalis life styles and intellectuals field in coming the muslims in the Middle age .
- be enthusiastic to pay visits by realizing historical importance of achievements and architectural inscriptions of Sultan and Mughal regime.

#### **Social and Cultural Life:**

In the Middle Age the influence of two religions - Hinduism and Islam prevailed in the social system of Bengal. In fact, social customs and practices were introduced centering round these two religions.

#### **Muslim Society:**

In the Middle Age during Muslim rule in Bengal as the head of the state the ruler was the possessor of the highest dignity or position in social life. The Hindus also complied with their incontestable social dignity and preference. The ruler Sultan had to carry out some special responsibilities especially as a leader of social life. It was special duty for a Muslim ruler to read out 'Khutba' in 'Zuma' and 'Eid' prayer. He had to join different social programs as a leader of the Muslim society. The rulers would build mosques, madrasas, 'khankas' etc. in their respective states to spread unity and religious spirit among the Muslims.

Muslim rulers lived in gorgeous palace. Their capitals were also adorned with different impressive edifices. In addition to opulence and formalities, a special trait of the palace was the assembly of wise and qualified people. The rulers were generous patrons of knowledge and science as well as art and culture.

There was the existence of three different classes of people such as higher, middle and lower class in the Muslim social system in Bengal of the Middle Age. Sayed, Ulema etc. People were very influential in the society. General people would respect the religious and the educated very much. In addition to general people, the rulers also would show special respect to them. As a token of respect they would be given allowance and allotted lands.

The Ulemas were experienced in Islamic Education. Kazi, Sadar and other religious staff were appointed out of them. The Sheiks would impart the public religious and spiritual education. They had remarkable contribution to the progress of Muslim society of Bengal in the Middle Age.

An aristocratic community grew up in the Muslim society in the Middle Age of Bengal. They shaped themselves as an exclusive class of people in comparison to general public by dint of talent and knowledge. They would earn their subsistence through the inculcation of science, art and knowledge. Any person could hold a dignified position of the state by means of competence and talent. In this case the example of Sultan Giasuddin Euaj Khilji and Subedar Murshid Kuli Khan are remarkable. Of course in the later period there was exception to this rule. The custom of inheriting dignified government position was introduced. In this age the aristocratic class consisted of employees of high positions in military and judicial department. The middle class consisted of lower-class government employees. The third class comprised of farmers, weavers and different types of workers.

Most of the farmers were Hindus. There were some occupations which were monopoly for the Muslims. Some social festivals would be celebrated in Muslim society. Still today the Muslims celebrate these festivals. The birth of a child was a delightful matter at that time. The Muslims used to observe a program called 'Akika' celebrating centering round the naming of the baby. 'Khatna' (circumcision) was a very familiar custom in the Muslim society. Marriage was a festive occasion for the Muslims. The Moulabis would perform marriage formalities according to Muslim customs and practices. There would be an arrangement of 'Bashor Sajjya' or 'Sohag Raat' for the newly married couple (a special bed for sleeping together and intimate love-making). The custom of child marriage and widow marriage was also in vogue in the Muslim society of Bengal. The Muslims followed some religious and social customs in different times for the sake of the dead. They inter the dead body and read out the verses from the holy Quran and conduct 'Milad' for the peace of the departed soul.

The presence of 'Molla' community in religious festivals and in programs like marriage was indispensable in the village life. 'Peer' or 'Fakir' community known as Sufi and Saint had much influence in the Muslim society. General people would use different kinds of religious amulets given by them to get rid of different problems.

A huge number of Hindus and Buddhists of Bengal were converted to Islam. The converted people could not give up some of the beliefs and prejudices of previous religions. Thus, belief in the teachings of spiritual leaders of Hindu society entered Muslim

The aristocratic Muslims were fond of luxurious food. The names of different fish, meat and prickles are found in their menu. Side by side of these foods, there was a place for kabab, 'rejala', 'korma' and all tasty foods cooked in ghee. Rice, fish and vegetables were the everyday food for Bengali Muslims. That they would also use bread as food is also known. Khicuri was the favorite food at that time.

The aristocratic Muslims would put on pajama, and round-necked shirt. They wore 'pagri' on their head and leather shoes embroidered with silk or gold thread. The Muslims would not be treated with respect without 'tupi' (religious cap). Poor and lower-class Muslims would put on 'lungi' and 'tupi'.

They were not used to using cosmetics. They would not put on golden ornaments in their arms wrists and golden rings in their fingers. Singing and use of musical instruments and different amusements were in vogue in Muslim society. For this purpose, they would also arrange different meetings and get-together. Aristocratic people liked to play 'chougun'. The children liked to play a game named 'geru'. Swimming and boat-rowing competition were popular sports. Wrestling, baiting, gambling etc. were in vogue in that society. General people would get especial amusement watching the game of tiger.

With the spread of Islam in Bengal, the Muslim society also started to expand. Two particular classes are noticeable in the Muslim society of Bengal. One was Muslims who had come from other places and the other was converted Muslims. There was no clash or conflict between the two classes despite the differences of heritage and customs. This was because of their generosity and patronage of local heritage and culture.

At the beginning of this age the Muslims earned special fame for their moral qualities and honesty. In the later period they failed to keep up strict moral standard in religious manners. As a result, corruption and non-Islamic activities intruded in Muslim society. The moral degradation of the Muslims in their social life also affected their ruling system. The moral degradation of the rulers was responsible to a great extent for the end of Nowab rule in Bengal.

#### **Individual Work:**

1. Mention the social festivals and customs of the Muslims of Bengal in the Middle Age.
2. How were the dresses of Muslims of Bengal of in the Middle Age?

#### **Hindu Society:**

The influence, customs and thinking trends of the Muslims of Bengal in the Middle Age intruded in Hindu society. All the same, there was no exchange in the main principles of Hindu society and its general social system. There was the custom of caste prevalent in this age also. This custom was originated from different occupations. There were four remarkable castes in the society- Brahmin, 'Kayostho', 'Baishyo' and 'Sudra'. There was no social communication among these four castes. The caste system was strictly followed then. As a result, there was a ban on the inter-caste marriage and communication.

The Brahmins had complete authority on religious activities. They were employed in different occupations for their living. The Brahmins who took medicine as an occupation

were known as 'Boidyo' in the society. 'Kayosthos' belonged to the middle class Hindu society. Their number was remarkable in the field of education and service. During Muslim rule, the 'Kayosthos' gained special name and fame. Agriculture was the main occupation for the 'Boishyo'. Many of them were also involved in business. The 'Sudras' belonged to the lowest class of the society. The people employed in the same occupation lived together in a particular place. The slave-system was in vogue in the society.

The Hindus followed different social customs and practices on the occasions of birth, marriage and death in the Middle Age in Bengal. The social occasions in vogue at that time are also noticed in the conservative Hindu society in the present time. Just after the birth of a baby, it would be washed with the water brought from the Ganges. 'Shosthi' puja would be arranged on the sixth day. A Brahmin counted 'Kosthi' of the baby. After a month of birth, 'Balok Utthan Parba' would be observed. There was the arrangement of 'Annoprashon' in the sixth month. Most of Hindu women would perform 'Upobash' and 'Ekadashi'.

Marriage is a remarkable social occasion in Hindu society. Based on the caste system there was the custom of marriage in the Hindu society. The custom of dowry and child marriage was also in vogue in this age. Men in the society would have more than one wife. There was a custom of house-husband. In the Hindu society of Bengal most of the families were extended. After the death of father the eldest son would take the responsibilities of the family. Devotion to husband was a remarkable trait of Hindu society.

The women of Hindu society did not have adequate rights at this time in Bengal. The husband considered his wife as his property. Daughters, parents, husbands and wives, and widows were dependent on children. Girls could not go out of the house without the permission of the master of the house. 'Satidaha' system was in vogue in the society. But it was not an obligatory social custom everywhere in Bengal. All the same, many women of this age were able to develop their independent entity by dint of own competence and intelligence. The achievement of women of this age in the cultural field was not also so small. There was regular practice of art and culture in rich families. The women of this age were skilled in 'Bina', 'Tanpura', and other musical instruments.

Women used clothes made of jute and cotton, rings, necklace, 'nakpasha', earring, bracelet made of gold, conch of gold, nose ring, armlet etc. as dresses and ornaments. Rich women used ornaments. These ornaments were made of gold, silver, tusk of elephants and budded with precious jewels and stones. Married women used as cosmetics vermilion, collyrium, musk mixed with sandal. Many of them used anklet with small bells. Only on special occasions these ornaments and cosmetics were used. Ordinary girls adorned themselves with ordinary attire in their respective houses. Sari was their everyday attire. Aristocratic and educated persons would use a sheet of cloth worn over the body, and turban. Rich people especially the merchants used necklace, earring and rings.

There was no remarkable difference between the foods of Hindu society of Bengal in the Middle Age and those of present Hindu society. Rice was their staple food. In addition, fish, meat, vegetables, milk, curd, ghee, and 'kheer' were in their menu. The breakfast of the poor was 'Pantabhat'(leftover rice kept in water for next morning's breakfast). Different types of cake made from rice were also popular tasty foods.



Bengali Brahmins used to eat proteins. Then all kinds of fish were available. Hilsa fish and dried fish were very popular food in east Bengal. Vegetables such as brinjal, gourd, pumpkin, 'jhinge', 'kakral', and arum would be produced. Fruits such as mangoes, jackfruits, bananas, palm, papaya, coconut, sugarcane etc. were available. Different types of wine were produced by fermenting rice, wheat, sugarcane, molasses, honey and palm juice. It is mentionable that there was not much difference between the menu of the Hindus and that of the Muslims of that time. But, eating beef was considered as an extreme irreligious action by the Hindus.

There was 'Kaulinyo' system in the Hindu society. As a result, various bad manners intruded to the society. The system was widely prevalent among Bragmins, Baiddyo and Kaiostho. The system of polygamy was introduced because of the system. Some social beliefs originated in Hindu and Muslim society in the Middle Age. The astrologers determined the auspicious time by searching and researching calendars and books. During this age, people believed in necromancy and black art of magic.

**Individual Work:** What kind of customs and rituals did the Hindus observe in the Middle Age.

### **Economic Condition and Trade and Commerce:**

The land of riverine Bengal was nurtured with the generous blessings of Nature. The agricultural land of this place was unusually fertile. The produced crops in the Middle Age included paddy, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, jute, ginger joyar, oil, beans, mustard and pulse. Among agricultural products onion, garlic, turmeric, cucumber etc. were remarkable. Mangoes, jackfruits, bananas, mosabbar, dates, etc. were produced in plenty. Beatle leaves, nuts, coconuts were also produced in good quantity. 'Gala' was also produced abundantly. Jute and silk started to be produced in Bengal from the very Muslim rule.

The main source of economic prosperity of Bengal was agriculture. Though agricultural products were in abundance in Bengal, the method of cultivation was not developed. There was no arrangement of irrigation in those days like today. Farmers had to depend on rain for water most of the time. They had nothing to do against drought.

Bengal being an agricultural country, a larger part of its people was farmers. There was abundance of agricultural products in Bengal. As a result, the surplus products would be exported to foreign countries. In course of time, these commercial activities expanded also in industries. During Muslim rule textile industry, sugar industry, boat making factory were set up in Bengal.

The prosperity in Bangladesh in textile industry was especially remarkable. Clothes made here were very developed in quality and standard. So, they were in great demand in foreign countries. Here colored and printed clothes were made for domestic use and white clothes for exporting abroad. Dhaka was the main center for industry of world famous cloth called Muslin. It was in great demand in Europe. This cloth was so subtle that 20 yards of Muslin could be put into a snuff box. The achievement of Bengal in making jute and silk clothes was also remarkable. Sugar, molasses and shipping industry also spread widely in Bengal.

We can know about different small industries of the Middle Age. In this context metal industry is especially remarkable. Then goods made of iron were widely in vogue. The blacksmiths would make different agricultural tools. In addition to this, metallic goods for everyday use such as swords sharp on edges, knives, sickles, spades etc. were made. The people of this country would make canons in Kolkata and Kasimbajar. We can also know about industries of paper, carpet, steel etc. We can also know about salt as a main industry.

There was a community of goldsmiths in the country. The Bangalee artisans would perform the works of gold, silver, bronze, wood, stone, tusk of elephants etc. with special skill. Dhaka had wide fame for conch industry. 'Shakhari Patri' of Dhaka reminds us of that fact still today.

The commercial activities of Bengal during Muslim rule had unprecedented expansion in foreign countries as a result of the abundance of agricultural and industrial goods of Bengal, and their great demand in foreign countries.

Of the export oriented goods of Bengal cotton clothes, Muslin, silk cloth, rice, sugar, molasses, ginger, chilly etc. were remarkable. Among the agricultural products rice, tobacco, nut, jute, fruits etc. would be exported. Besides various agricultural and industrial products, salt, vine, opium, different spices, medicine etc. were sent to different places of India and foreign countries. Then there was slave system in the society.

Most part of trade and commerce was export. A very small amount of goods would be imported. Cotton would be imported as raw material due to increase in demand of cloth in Bengal. The Bengali merchants would import cotton from Gujrat, silk from China, luxurious goods from Iran. Besides, gold, silver and precious stones would be imported in Bengal.

During Muslim rule quite a number of sea ports and river ports were built in Bengal. Chittagong was a famous sea port of that time. Orissa, Sonargoan, Gaur, Bakla (Barisal), Murshidasbad, Kashimbazar, Hoogly, Patna of Bihar and Piply of Odisha were remarkable commercial ports.

With the expansion of trade and commerce, there was an increase in transactions of goods and money as well as keeping accounts. So, in course of time banking system evolved. During this time transactions were made in foreign countries through 'Hundi'. Goods were available and cheap in Bengal during the whole Middle Age. Famous traveler of the 14th century wrote that goods were cheaply available only in Bengal across the whole world. In spite of that it is known from contemporary literature that there were a lot of poor people in the country side by side of the rich. So, though goods were cheap, the ordinary people did not have any purchasing capacity.

The Hindus had more preference than the Muslims in industry, trade and commerce and other economic activities of Bengal. The local traders and dealers did not have any control over trade and commerce. The Arabian and Persian merchants controlled trade and commerce of this country. Only they had monopoly control over trade by river. In the later periods, the Portuguese and other European merchants started to exercise their domination in the field of business.

<p><b>Individual work:</b> Make a list of agricultural and industrial goods produced in Bengal in the Middle Age.</p>
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### Architecture and the art of Painting:

The Muslim rulers built many palaces, mosques, graveyards, 'dargahs' in different places of Bengal in different times in order to establish the glory of Islam and make their conquests and regimes memorable. The Muslim rulers considered building of mosques as very virtuous job. There are still many reminiscences still found in the ruins of the buildings constructed during the regimes of the Sultans.

The capital of the Muslim Sultans of independent Bengal was first in Gaur, then Pandua and again in Gaur. So, the architectural art of Muslim Bengal developed in these two cities first. Sultan Sikander Shah built 'Adina Mosque' in 1369.

There is a graveyard of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1410 A.D.) in Sonargoan, 15 miles away from present Dhaka. There are five 'dargahs' and five mosques very near this graveyard. These are known as 'Panch Peerer Dargah'. The tomb of Sultan Giasuddin Azam Shah is a nice testimony of the art of architecture.

A remarkable achievement of the regime of Sultan Jalaluddin is 'Eklakhi Mosque' situated in Pandua. It was built between 1418 and 1423. There is a hearsay that the mosque was built at the cost of taka one lakh at that time. So, it has been known as 'Eklakhi Mosque'. This mosque is actually a tomb. He and his sons and his wife were buried in this mausoleum. The reflection of Hindu architecture is noticed in the arts of this mosque.

Another name of 'Bara Sona Mosque' is 'Baroduari Mosque'. There were twelve big doors in this mosque. There was inlay of gold gilt in this mosque. Probably, it was called 'Sona Mosque'. This was the biggest mosque of Gaur. Hossein Shah built this mosque to make Assam conquest memorable. Nusrat Shah finished its construction in 1527.

'Choto Sona Mosque' was built in present Firujibad village in the last south end of Gaur. This mosque was small in size. Yet there was also an inlay of gilt of gold in this mosque. Probably, it is known as 'Choto Sona Mosque' for this reason. A Wali Mohammad of the time of Alauddin Hossain Shah was the founder of this mosque.



Picture : Adina Mosque, Gaur



Picture : Graveyard of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah, Sonargang



Picture: Eklakhi Mosque, Pandua.



Picture: Bara Sona Mosque (Barduri Mosque) Gaur.



Picture: Choto Sona Mosque Gaur.

The tomb of Khan Jahan Ali was built in the district of Bagerhat. According to legend, a 'peer' named Khan Jahan Ali settled down at that place. He died in the very place in 1459. He was a contemporary of Sultan Nasiruddin Ilias.



Picture : The Tomb of Khan Jahan Ali, Bagerhat

The 'Shat Gombuj Mosque' of the district of Bagerhat has increased the glory of the regime of the Muslims of Bengal. The 'Shat Gombuj Mosque' is situated three miles south east of the tomb of Khan Jahan Ali. Of course, it has 77 domes, not 60. It was built in the middle of the 15th century. Uluk Khan Jahan , a Turkish general and an earnest devotee of Islam , built this mosque. This architectural work has been recognized as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.



Picture : Shat Gombuj Mosque, Bagerhat

'Kadam Rasul' is situated in Gaur. This building was built to show respect to the footprint of the prophet. Nusrat Shah built this in 1531. A piece of stone with the footprint of Hazrat Mohammad (SM) was steadied on a stone of black inlays in a room of this building.



Picture : Kadam Rasul, Gaur

Baba Adamer Mosque' is situated in Rampala in Dhaka district. It was built during the reign of Malik Kafur Fateh Shah in 1483. In addition to these, there are many mosques and tombs in different places of Bengal.



Picture : Baba Adamer Mosque, Rampala, Dhaka

In addition to mosques and mausoleums, different rooms with gates and minarets constructed in this age are the excellent testimonies of architectural art of Bengal. Among them 'Dakhil Darwaza' constructed by Rukunuddin Barbak Shah in Gaur and tomb-gate of Alauddin Hossain Shah are specially remarkable. 'Firuj Minar' of Gaur is another excellent testimony of architectural art. Many think that Habsi Sultan Saifuddin Firuj Shah built it.



Picture : Dakhil Darwaza, Gaur

During Mughal period the rulers of Bengal made wonderful contribution to art. Still today there are inscriptions of fondness of Mughal rulers for art. Because of their patronage many mosques, tombs, mausoleums, 'majar', forts, columns, and gates were built. This age is called the golden age of Mughals in Bengal for the development of architectural art. The design and beauty of architectural art of the Mughal period were different from those of other times.



Picture: Bara Kutra, Dhaka.

The domes of mosques of this age were curved. Mosaic would be done on the body of the domes. There was inlay of creepers and herbs around the arch. The summit of the dome used to be tall pointed like needle. The body of the mosque had ornamentation of creepers and herbs and flowers. The size of the buildings of Mughal period was enormous. Famous edifices of this age were built in Dhaka.

During the Mughal period quite a number of buildings named 'Kutra' were built. There were guest rooms. 'Bara Kutra' of Dhakas was built by Shah Suja. It was



Picture: Hajigonj Fort (Khijirpur Fort), Narayanganj.



Picture: Shahi Mosque of Lalbagh, Dhaka.



Picture: Choto Kutra, Dhaka.

Hajigonj Fort (at present known as Khijirpur Fort) situated on the north shore of the Sitalakhya in the district of Narayangonj was probably established by Subedar Mir Jumla (1660-1663). The fort was made to prevent the attack of Mog and Portuguese pirates.

Subedar Shahsuja Azam built a number of buildings. He built an enormous 'Katra' neasling the edge of the Buriganga. It was his reign when Shahi mosque of Lalbag was built.

The name of Saesta Khan is especially remarkable in the spread of Mughal art in Bengal. Saesta Khan built 'Choto Katra' in 1663. It is situated 200 yards away from 'Bara Katra'. There is a mosque and a dome inside it. The Lalbag Kella still reminds us of the rule of Saesta Khan. Its construction work started before his rule. He took steps to complete it.



Picture: Fort of Lalbagh, Dhaka.



Picture: Hosseini Dalan, Dhaka.

Its construction work started in 1690 during the rule of Ibrahim Khan. The mausoleum of Bibi Pori, the daughter of Saesta Khan is inside the Lalbag fort. The marble-made tomb is still considered the most beautiful Muslim inscriptions. Saesta Khan built Hosseini building in 1676. The name of Saesta Khan is associated with the mosque at Chakbazar, the mosque of Saesta Khan situated on the Buriganga and Shatgombuj mosque.

Many edifices were also made during the rule of the Nowabs of Bengal. Gingira Palace is their architectural achievement. Begum Bigar mosque was made during the time of Murshid Kuli Khan. In Murshidabad he made a Katra and Mosque . A palace named Chehel Setun was also built in his time. It was an enormous building for meetings. In addition to these buildings, many forts, eidgahs, Hammamkhana, Chillakhua and bridges were made during Mughal regime. These artistic achievements of Mughal rule cast a far-reaching influence on the cultural life of Bengal.



Picture: The mausoleum-tomb of Bibi Pori, Dhaka

### Group Work:

Make a list mentioning correctly on their side where the jumbled given architectural achievements in the table are situated:



SL Name	of architectural achievements Name	of place
01	Adina Mosque	Dhaka
02	Bara Sona Mosque	Bagerhat
03	Tomb of Pori Bibi	Gaur
04	Shatgombuj Mosque	Sonargoan
05	Tomb of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah	Pandua

### Religious Condition:

Like the present age the Hindus of those days also practiced different types of religious customs and occasions. The Hindus worshiped different Gods and Goddesses in pomp and gorgeousness. Among them Laksmi, Sharaswati, Gonesh, Shiba, Chandi, Monosa, Bishnu, Krishno, Surjo, Madan, Narayan, Brakkha, Agni, Shitala, Shasthi, Ganga etc. were remarkable. The Durga Puja is particularly remarkable in the social life of Bengali Hindus. The Hindus would consider Dashhara, Ganga Snan, Astomi Snan and Maghi Saptami Snan sanctimonious. The water of the Ganges was very holy to the devout Hindus. They would celebrate religious festivals such as Doljatra, Rathjatra, Holi etc.

There were a number of religious communities in the Hindu society besides caste system such as Shaiba, Shakto etc. The influence of Baishnob religion on the Hindus was remarkable during this time. During this time a remarkable trait of Hindu society was religious intolerance. There was no closeness and amity among different religious communities of Hindu society. Spite and clashes were a very common affair among different communities.

The Muslims also would observe various religious customs and occasions like the present time. Eid-ul- fitre and Eid-ul-Ajha would be observed as main religious festivals of Muslim society. Every devout Muslim keeps fast during the Ramadan and passes the night of Shab-e-barat in prayer and oblation. The Muslims used to dress themselves with new and clean clothes according to their means in different festivals and strengthen among them friendship and brotherhood through exchanging pleasantries and invitation going to one another's home.

Sultans, Subedars, and Nawabs would come close to the general public on the occasions of religious festivals. The Muslims would celebrate the birthday of the prophet (sm) with special pomp. 'Moharram' would be observed in the Middle Age like the present time.

It is known as a main religious festival of the Shiyha community. On this occasion the Shiyha would make 'Tajia'. According to Muslim calendar, the first day of the month of Maharram would be observed as the New Year. The Muslims would receive the rise of the moon of Moharram with joy and fervor.

A remarkable trait of the Muslim society was love for religion. The devout Muslims would perform their prayer five times a day. Besides, they would read out the Quran and Hadith regularly. Special importance would be given to religious education. Both boys and girls would be sent to Maktab for the purpose of religious education. 'Molla' community would be given special importance for religious knowledge and for conducting religious programs in the society. The 'mollas' would suggest performing actions as per the directions of the Quran and Hadith in different matters and solving many problems. The

presence of 'molla' community in religious festivals and social programs like marriage was indispensable in the village life.

The 'peer' and 'fakir' community named 'sufi' and saints had enough influence in the Muslim society. They were well versed in religious scriptures and always absorbed in spiritual devotion. They built 'dargahs' in different places to practice religion. They were respected by all - rulers and the general people.

With the spread of Islam in Bengal, the Muslim society also started to expand. There are two special classes are noticed in the Muslim society in Bengal. One is Muslims who came from other countries and the other is converted Muslims. Despite differences of customs and heritage between the Muslims of other countries and the local Muslims, there were no instances of clash among them. This was because of the generosity of the Muslim rulers and their patronage towards local culture and heritage.

#### **Individual Work:**

How were the religious customs and occasions of the Muslims of the Middle Age?

#### **Language, Literature and Education**

The contribution of Sultan and Mughal regime to the development and promotion of Bengali literature and language is remarkable. In this field whose name is first needed to be mentioned is Sultan Giasuddin Azam Shah (1393-1411) belonging to Ilias Shahi Dynasty. It was his regime when first Bengali Muslim poet Shah Mohammad Sagir wrote his amorous poem 'Eusuf-Julekha'. It was translated from Persian. Some more poets of the Sultan regime also translated Persian poems. Among them the name of Daulot Uzir Baharam Khan and the name of Dona Gazi are remarkable.

The contribution of the Muslims as the pioneer in writing historical literature in Bengali is unforgettable. Many Muslim poets being inspired by the idealism of Islam wrote poems about invasion and conquest. Its main theme was admiration about the excellence of the Muslims. Among the writers of conquest verses, the writer of 'Rasul Bijoy', Joynuddin was famous. The Muslim poets of Bengal wrote collections of verses. Chand Gazi was the creator of the first collection of small verses of Bengali literature. Many poets of this age wrote poems in Bengali describing the greatness the 'peers' (religious guru). The Muslim leaders also inculcated music in Bengali. Poet Faizullah wrote the first book 'Ragmala' (a collection of ragas) on music in Bengali literature. Poet Mozammel wrote books named 'Neetishastro'(book on ethics) and 'Satnama'.

The Muslim poets also made great contributions to prosperity of Bengali language and beautification of Bengali literature. They have used many Arabian and Persian words in Bengali language. 'Allah', 'Khoda', 'Nabi', 'Poygambar', 'kitab'etc. used by the poets of those time have enriched Bengali vocabulary.

During the Sultan period Hindu poets also made great contribution to literature. In this case, inspiration and patronage of Muslim rulers inspired the Hindus. The development and promotion of Bengali literature has immortalized the regime of Hussain Shah. Undoubtedly, his generous patronage has increased the beauty of Bengali literature.

Among the writers and poets of this age Rupgoswami, Sonaton Goswami, Maladhar Basu, Bijoygupta, Bipradas and Joshoraj Khan were remarkable. During that time Maladhar Basu translated into Bangla 'Sreemogbhagbat' and 'Puranas'. Kabindra Parameswar translated Mahabharata into Bangla with the patronage of Sultan Hussain Shah and Nasiruddin Nusrat Shah.

The name Brindaban Das as a Baishnab poet is particularly remarkable. It was he who first biographical book 'Chaitanyo-Bhagbat' on Sreechaitanyodeb. Chandrabati wrote the poem 'Monosha Mongol'.

The Muslim Sultans had contribution to also Sanskrit literature. Sanskrit and Bengali are closely related. That is why; many Muslim rulers had interest in it. Many of them practiced Sanskrit language individually. During Muslim rule Bengal was a center for the inculcation of Sanskrit literature. Not only Bengali and Sanskrit, there was an air of inculcation of Arabian and Persian poetry in the Sultanate.

Much development in Bengali literature and culture during Mughal period is also noticed. But the Mughal rulers did not extend much cooperation like the rulers of the age of the Sultans in the field of language and literature. The Zaminders of Bengal kept that tradition intact by their own attempts.

During the Muslim rule Bengal had political relation with its neighbouring country Arakan. As a result, Bengali literature started to spread and expand in Arakan. Daulat Gazi was one of the greatest poets of the royal court of Arakan. Alaowl was another poet of that royal court. Of his six books of poetry 'Padmabati' was the best. He translated some Persian books of poetry in Bengali. Besides, he wrote a book on music named 'Ragnama'.

Baharam Khan wrote the book of poetry, 'Laily-Majnu'. 'Janganama' and 'Hitogyan Banee' were written by Kazi Hayat Mahmud. Poet Shah Garibullah was a famous ancient manuscript writer.

## **Education**

The Muslim rule of Bengal contributed not only to political and social field but also to education. During the Muslim rule the door of education was open to all Hindus and Muslims. The 'Khankahs' of the Sheiks and the houses of the 'Ulemas' became the center for education. During the Muslim rule countless number of mosques were built everywhere in Bengal. There were 'muktab' and 'madrasas' along with these mosques. Boys and girls together would study in these 'muktab' and 'pathshalas'. The learners of 'muktab' and 'Madrasay' would receive higher education. Primary education was compulsory for all Muslims boys and girls. Female education was not much in vogue then. Receiving secondary education was not also compulsory for girls. As a result, the general Muslim girls were deprived of receiving higher education. The language of the rulers was Persian. As a result, this language was about to get state dignity. Nawabs and Muslim aristocrats encouraged Persian language and literature. Many Hindus received education in Persian language with a view to getting government jobs. The Muslim

teachers were well-versed in Persian and Arabic. During this time, Bengali language attained particular prosperity. Many books were written in Bengali so that the Muslims ignorant of Arabic and Persian can understand the thoughts and ideas of Islam. Their works of literature have enriched the store of Bengali language and literature.

Before the Muslim rule, the Brahmins had monopoly rights in the field of science and knowledge, and education in the Hindu society of east Bengal. During the Muslim rule, the door of education was open to all classes of the Hindus. Hindu boys and girls would receive primary education in the 'pathshalas'. 'Pathshalas' would sit in the abode of the guru or in the house of the wealthy. Sometimes, 'muktab' and 'pathshala' would sit under the same roof of a room. In the morning, 'munsi' and in the afternoon guru would teach their students respectively. The wealthy persons would bear the expenses the expenditures of the 'pathshalas'. In this case, Hindu boys and girls would together receive education in the 'pathshalas'. They had to receive education in the 'pathshalas' for six years. There was a system of 'toul' for higher education. The learners would have to receive education through Sanskrit. Nabadwip and Bardwan were remarkable for the inculcation of Sanskrit literature. Many women have showed their own achievements in the practice of education and Sanskrit in this age. A class of the Brahmins would always devote themselves in astrology and astronomy. In addition to different educational institutions, there were several methods in vogue such as religious songs, popular folk and drama-ballads for the purpose of developing in people knowledge and intellect.

### Questions for Practice:

#### Multiple choice Questions:

1. Which poetry is written in Persian?  
(a) Rasul Bijoy (b) Ragmala  
(c) Eusuf Julekha (d) Satnama
2. Why did the Hindus receive education in Persian in the Middle age?  
(a) to write literature (b) to get jobs  
(c) to do administrative jobs (d) for political purpose

#### Read the paragraph below and answer the question 3 and 4:

Limon's uncle had been doing his business in a number of countries of Europe including America for many years. In order to expand his business he has opened a branch office in Narayanganj in his own country. He makes business transactions through banks. He uses personal airplane for business advantages.

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## Chapter Seven

# The first stage of English rule in Bengal

From ancient time Indian subcontinent -especially the Bengal region was like a fairy state full of wealth and riches. The villages of this region was self-sufficient i.e. things necessary for life were available in these villages. The peasants of these self-sufficient villages had fields full of crops, granary full of paddy, ponds abounding with fishes. These villages were also rich in cottage industry. The cloth woven by the weavers was more developed than that of Europe. Among them Muslin was world famous. Moreover, other regions of the subcontinent were famous for various types of commercial products and spices. Many person came forward to conduct business with this country at the attraction of these products. English East-India Company also came to the subcontinent to conduct business. In the later periods they became able to occupy the state power. This chapter has focused on how the East India Company introduced English rule in this region by defeating other European companies which came in this country and by intriguing in various ways against local rulers.

**At the end of this chapter we will be able to-**

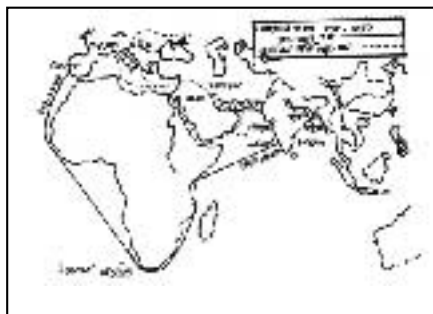
- • explain the background of English rule in Bengal;
- • evaluate the causes and effects of the battle of Palassy and Boxer;
- • explain the importance of gaining stewardship in establishing English rule;
- • explain the background and the effects of Permanent Settlement;
- • realize the political changes in Bengal as a result of English rule.

### Arrival of the Europeans

From the 7th century the Arabian merchants had monopoly business with this region. They mainly conducted business by sea. In 1453 the Automaan Turkish occupied Constantinople. As a result, trade and commerce with the subcontinent by sea came to an end. Therefore, discovery of new water ways became necessary for business between the East and the West. Basically, this is the reason for which the European powers started expedients by sea to come to this subcontinent.

### Portuguese

Among the Portuguese, the daring sailor who first came to this country by sea was Vasco-da-Gama. He arrived at Kalikot port on the western coast of India on 27 May in 1498. His arrival in this country introduced a new age in the field of trade and commerce, and communication. In fact, the Portuguese by degrees tended to expand the Empire in this country in guise of trade and commerce. Within a short time these Portuguese merchants became able to establish offices at Kalikot, Choul, Bombay, Saalcity, Besin, Kochin, Goa, Domon, Diu



Map : Trail of Vasco-da-Gama to India



etc. ports of the western coast of the subcontinent. In 1538 they got permission to set up duty base in Chittagong and Satgoan. In 1579 they built up a colony in Hoogly. After that they became to expand their habitats in Orissa and in some regions of Bengal. Though the Portuguese played a pioneering role in setting up commercial office in different regions of the subcontinent including Bengal, because of their misdeeds and piracy Saesta Khan, the Subedar of Bengal drove them away by occupying their bases of Chittagong and Swandwip. Besides, the Portuguese were also defeated by other European powers in competitions. As a result, they were bound to leave this country.

### **Dutch**

The Dutch formed 'Dutch East-India Company' and came to this subcontinent for the purpose of business in 1602. In India according to the charter of the company they set up their commercial office in Kalikot, Nagapatnam, Chachuran and Bankura of Bengal. Besides, they also set up offices at Balasor Kashimbazar and Baranagar. There started a clash between the Dutch and the other European power, the English about trade and commerce; at the same time they were locked in opposition with the rulers of Bengal. They were miserably defeated by the English in the battle of Bidara in 1759. As a result, closing all their commercial centers they were bound to leave India. First the Portuguese, then the fall of Dutch power eased the rise of English power.

### **Danish**

A group of merchants of Denmark formed 'Danish East-India Company' in order to do business. They set up commercial office in Tribankur in the district of Tanjor of South India in 1620 and in Sreerampur of Bengal in 1676. But they failed to make profits from their business in this country. In 1845 they sold their commercial offices to the English and left this country without any type of commercial success.

**Group Work:** Make a list of commercial offices set up in the subcontinent by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Danish.

### **English**

The success of the European merchants by sea, plenty of wealth and resources of the East also inspired the English merchants to conduct trade and commerce in this region. To this end, a group of merchants of England formed an association of merchants named East India Company. The association of merchants got a certificate from Queen Elizabeth in 1608 to conduct monopoly business in the East. The representative of the company appeared at the court of emperor Akbar, the Great with this certificate with the hope of getting commercial benefits. After that Captain Hawkins with the recommendation letter of James saw emperor Jahangir in 1608 with a view to expanding trade and business. In the later periods in 1615 Sir Thomas Roe as representative of James I came to the court of emperor Jahangir. He got commercial benefits realized from the emperor for the English. He left India in 1619. Meanwhile the company strengthened their foundation by setting up commercial offices in Surat, Agra, Ahmedabad etc. The company established their second commercial office in Maslimpatnam. After that they set up another commercial office in Balasor of Bengal. When their power started to increase by degrees, they became able to

build a fort on the Karmandal coast. They built a commercial office in Hoogly in 1658 with the approval from Shah Suja, a Subedar of Bengal. Thus the company built commercial offices in Kashimbazar, Dhaka and Maldah.

In 1668 the second king of England Charles II got Bombay as dowry of marriage with Catherine, the princess of Portuguese. For want of money Charles sold the city to East India Company at the cost of fifty thousand pounds. In the later periods this city of Bombay became the main commercial center of the company.

Another Englishman named Job Charnak gained the possession of landlord of three villages named Kolkata, Sutanti and Govindpur at the cost of Tk. 1200 in 1690. In the later periods the city of Kolkata came into being centering round these three villages on the river Bhagirathi. Just here the company built Fort William after the name of the king of England, William III in 1700. Gradually it turned to a powerful center for keeping the interest of the English and for the expansion of political interest. The power of English company increased further when the emperor of Delhi Farukshiar gave them the right of duty free trade in Bengal, Bombay and Madras. At the same time the company got the right of introducing their own currency. English historian Urme referred to this order of the emperor as the Magna-Carta of the East India Company. Gaining this right East India Company started to march forward at an irresistible speed.

**Individual Work:**

1. Make a list of three villages centering round which the city of Kolkata came into being. How old is Kolkata now?
2. Why are the attained rights as a result of certificate given to the English by the Emperor of Delhi called Magna-Carta? Write down the causes.

**French**

The last European merchant company that came to the subcontinent is French East India Company. This merchant company was formed in 1664. In 1668 the company set up commercial offices first in Surat and in the following year in Muslimpatnam. In 1673 French colony was built up in Pandichery.

Since 1674 they expanded commercial activities in Bengal. The company bought the village Chandannagar situated on the bank of the Ganges from Saesta Khan, the Subedar of Bengal. Chandannagar turned to a powerful protected French commercial office between 1690 and 1692. The company became able to build a powerful fort here in 1696. On the condition of paying duty at a fixed rate, the French got the right of conducting trade and commerce in Bihar and Orissa in 1693. In the later periods they became able to set up a commercial office in Balsor in Kashimbazar.

When English merchants were conducting trade in full swing, the French came to this country. In this state they found it difficult to sustain in competition with the English because like other European merchants the French started dreaming about setting up of empire here. As a result, collision became inevitable between the French and the English. The French were defeated because of the intrigues, diplomatic strategy and developed

military strategy of the English. They became more exhausted by the success of the English in the battle of Polassy in 1757 for supporting the Nawabs of Bengal. As a result, the French offices in Bengal went under the possession of the English. The French company left this country after being defeated in the battles of Karnatak of Deccan.

**Individual Work:** Justify the relation between the defeat of Nawab in the battle of Palassy and the failure of the French East India Company.

### The Battle of Polassy

Alibardi Khan was the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from 1740 to 1756. He ruled the country successfully despite adverse situations. He became successful in suppressing the Marathas and Bargis. He controlled the merchants of the British East India Company tactfully. But after his death, there appeared extreme disorder in the politics of Bengal.

Before his death, Nawab nominated Sirajuddoula, son Amena Begum who was his eldest daughter as a heir to the throne of Delhi. Alibardi Khan having died in 1756, his loving grandson Sirajuddoula took the charge of the Nawab. He had to face various intrigues and problems immediately after he ascended to the throne. His first problem was the conspiracy of the close relatives of his family. Especially, the Ghateshi Begum, the eldest of three daughters of Alibardi Khan being disappointed with Siraj being the Nawab became involved in conspiracy against the Nawab. They were joined by Raja Rajballab, manager of Ghasheti Begum, the ruler of Purnia and cousin of Sirajuddoula, Shawkat Jang and others. Nawab kept Ghasheti Begum under observation tactfully. Shawkat Jang, the ruler of Purnia having revolted, Sirajuddoula defeated and killed him in a battle and occupied Purnia. Though Nawab could suppress the family conspiracy, another web of conspiracy spread outside the palace. Merchants of home and abroad, influential lords of the palace of Nawab and aristocracy including military general of Nawab, Mirzafar and others were involved in the conspiray. Every one conspired against Nawab to gain their respective interest. The conspirators started to make the background of the battle of Polassy.

### The causes of the battle of Polassy

The battle of Polassy was such an event for the people of this region as can cause fearful disaster in the fate of the people of a country. The causes of this event are mentioned below:

- According to the rule in vogue, the English did not send any gift to new Nawab after Sirjuddoula ascended to the throne of Bengal and did not pay a courtesy visit. Nawab became very angry at such misdemeanor of the English.
- They kept building fort despite his prohibition.
- The English company having abused the summons, the national merchants started to be losers. Nawab forbade abusing the summons and ordered to abide by the condition of trade and business. The company also defied that order.



Picture : Nawab Sirajuddoula

- The English refused to pay tax by infringing the conditions of the agreement with Alibardi Khan. Besides, they also showed arrogance to oppress the public.
- Krishnodas, son of Raja Rajballab together with the family members taking a lot of riches took shelter to the English in Kolkata. Nawab sent messenger to the English to send him back but English governor insulted the messenger of Nawab and drove him away. Before that during the rebellion of Shawkat Jang the English supported the rebels against Nawab.

The manners of arrogance and disobedience of the English one after another infuriated Nawab. In order to teach them a good lesson Nawab occupied Kolkata at the beginning of June of 1756. On the way he also occupied the commercial office of Kashimbazar. At the abrupt attack of Nawab, the English fled away leaving Fort William. A good number of English including Hallwel had to surrender. Acquitted of captivity, Hallwel spread a propaganda to debase Nawab which is in history known as 'Andhakup Hattya'(Killing in dark well). In the propaganda it was said that 146 English men were kept arrested in a room of 18 feet length and 10.14 feet width. 123 people died of suffocation due to tremendous heat. This propaganda traveled up to Madras. As a result, agitated Watson and Clive came from Madras to occupy Kolkata. They defeated Manikchand, the chief of army and occupied Kolkata. When Nawab sensed that he was surrounded by intrigues and enemy, he became submissive towards the English and was bound to sign a disgraceful treaty. In history it is called Alinagar Treaty.

Clive's ambition soared high after getting all types of privileges provided in Alinagar Treaty. Taking the advantage of the weaknesses of Nawab, the English occupied Chandannagar Kuti belonging to the French on the excuse of a seven hundred year war in Europe. In this state Nawab made alliance with the French to teach the English a good lesson. At this Clive became furious and involved himself in conspiracy to depose Nawab.

In this conspiracy Clive is joined by extremely rich merchant Jagatsheth, Raydurlav, Umichand, Raja Rajballav and the chief of army Mirzafar.

### **The event of the battle of Palassy**

The battle of Palassy is an important event for Bengal even the subcontinent. This battle took place in the mango garden of Palassy on the bank of the Bhagirathi. By this time, Robert Clive steadied his condition and declared battle against Sirajuddoula on the excuse of infringing the treaty. Patriot Mirmadan, Mohonlal and French chief of army Sean Frey fought heart and soul in favour of Nawab. Mirmadan was killed in the battle. Mirzafar intriguingly stopped fighting sensing the imminent victory of Nawab. The death of Mirmadan and non-cooperation of Mirzafar tensed Nawab.



Picture : The battle field of palassy

The army chief of Nawab Mirzafar acted like a silent spectator with his non-cooperation in the battle field. Mirzafar did not stop conspiring despite Nawab getting him swear by touching the holy Quran. When the soldiers of Nawab were taking rest, the English soldiers descended on them at the gesticulation of Mirzafar the inevitable result of which was the defeat of Nawab.

### **The causes of the fall of Nawab**

- Treachery and non-cooperation of army chief of Nawab and their abettors in the battle field.
- All from the army chief of Nawab from his courtiers sacrificed the interest of the country for their own interest.
- Young Nawab was deficient of experience, prudence, intelligence and steadiness. He failed to take quick decision in the battle field.
- He depended on Mirzafar time and again despite his knowledge about the conspiracy of Mirzafar.
- Sirajuddoula did not evaluate the warning and advice of Alibardi Khan about the conspiracy of the English and the French.
- The enemies of Nawab were united and their fighting strategy was developed.
- Robert Clive had prudence, subtlety and cunning.

### **The results of the battle of Polassy**

- The defeat and the death of Sirajuddoula eased the way to the direct colonial rule.
- As a result of the battle though Mirzafar was made to ascend to the throne, he was mere a Nawab; Robert Clive held the actual power.
- As a result of the battle of Polashy the English got the right of conducting monopoly business in Bengal. The French was bound to leave this country.
- After this battle socio-economic and political changes of this country started to take place in favor of the interest of the English.
- The far-reaching effect of the battle of Polashy was the establishment of the rule of the company in the subcontinent. Thus the independence of Bengal even India wallowed on the ground.

Therefore, it is seen that the battle of Palashy though a partial battle has unlimited importance in the politics of Bengal even the whole subcontinent.

**Group Work:** Draw a picture showing the positions of the armies of Nawab and the English in the battlefield of Palashy.

**The battle of Boxar (1764)**

The purpose for which the English Merchant company got Mirzafar to ascend to the throne could not become successful. The new Nawab became bankrupt failing to pay the company its due money. He had to depend on Robert Clive again and again to protect his power also. Again, Nawab did not like frequent interference of Clive in the administration of the state. Mirzafar made entente with another European company, the Dutch. The matter could not be hidden from the English. Mirzafar was deposed for allegation of inefficiency, inability to pay additional money and entente with the Dutch. In 1760 English governor Vancitart deposed Mirzafar and seated Mir Kashim on the throne on condition. The battle of Boxer took place due to the willingness of Mir Kashim to sustain in power.

**The causes of the battle of Boxar:**

Mir Kashim was an efficient ruler, a prudent politician and a free will person. He was careful of the welfare of his subjects. He wanted to overcome economic and military weaknesses saving the interest of Bengal with the English in a respectful way. To this end the measures adopted by him at last became the causes of the battle of Boxer.

- Mir Kashim first took steps to stop political interference of the English and make the administration free from influence. For this purpose he transferred the capital from Murshidabad to Munger. He built forts and dug trenches around the capital for safety.
- He appointed two European soldiers as trainers to resist probable attack of the English and to teach the soldiers European military methods.
- He made arrangements to make canons, rifles etc. in the capital so that he did not have to depend on others for arms and ammunitions.
- The ruler of Bihar Ramnarayan having shown interest towards the English, Mir Kashim terminated him from his post and confiscated his property.
- The English started to abuse the privileges given in the summons by Mogul Emperor in 1717 to conduct business. The local businessmen started to be affected as a result of the abuse of the license called 'Dastak'. As a result, Nawab adopted only one system for all and withdrew all duties from internal business. Consequently, the employees of the English experienced difficulties in their monopoly profitable business. Nawab not wanting to compromise in this matter, collision with the English became inevitable.
- All the steps taken by Nawab were for the interest of country and its people but against the interest of the English. So, the angry English were taking preparation to remedy it.
- In 1763 the principal of 'Patna Kuthi' Elice having been angry attacked Patna and occupied it. So, Nawab did not have any alternatives to taking up arms against the English. Mir Kashim drove away Elice from Patna through successful resistance. In 1763 the Kolkata Council declared battle against Nawab. Nawab was miserably defeated in the battles of Giria, Katoa and Udaynala by the English army sent under the leadership of Major Adams.



By this time, the English seated Mirzafar on the throne of Bengal. Mir Kashim though defeated did not become disappointed. Nawab started taking preparation to encounter the English. He made alliance with Nawab Sujuddoula of Ajoddha and Moghul Emperor Shah Alam and took part in the extreme test of power against the English in a place of Bihar named Boxar in 1764. Unfortunately, the allied forces were extremely defeated by Major Monroe.

Due to the defeat of Mir Kashim the last attempt to recover the sovereignty of Bengal turned to a failure. The English started to expand their power at an irresistible speed in Bengal even everywhere in the subcontinent. This is why in the history of the subcontinent the battle of Boxar is much more important than that of Polashy.

<b>Individual Work:</b> Arrange the table correctly.	
<b>Names of the participants in the battle of Boxar and names of country</b>	
Name	Country
Mir Kashim	England
Emperor Shah Alam	Bengal
Major Monroe	Ajoddha
Sujauddoula	Delhi

### **Results of the battle of Boxar:**

1. As a result of this battle the last attempts to save the independence of Mir Kashim turned to a failure.
2. Defeated in this battle Sujauddoula, Nawab of Ajoddha fled to Rohilakhand. The Emperor of Delhi Shah Alam joined the English. Defeated Mir Kashim hid himself. He died in 1777.
3. The English became able to get Kara and Elahabad handed over to him from Nawab of Ajoddha.
4. As a result of this battle, not only Nawab of Bengal but also his allies Emperor of India Shah Alam and Nawab Ajoddha, Sujuddoula were also defeated. The defeat of this tri-power together increased the dignity and the power of the English.
5. As a result of this battle Robert Clive formally got the stewardship of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the Emperor of Delhi. Consequently, the rights of the English got legally recognized in Bengal and they started to become infinitely powerful.

The defeat of Mir Kashim in the battle of Boxar not only put an end to Nawab rule but also clearly revealed the weaknesses of Mogul emperor to the English. As a result, the English started to express themselves fast as a colonial power.

### **Achieving of Dewany by the company**

In 1765 after the death of Mirzafar his son, Nazim-ud-Doula was seated on the throne of Bengal on condition. The condition was that according to the old own 'dastak' he, like his father, would allow the English to make duty-free unrestricted business and cancel the privilege of unrestricted trade for the local merchants. After the battle of Boxar, the way to the English rule in Bengal became easy. At this time the English company got complete power to collect revenues of Bengal from Mogul emperor. In 1765 after getting dewany, the English actually exposed themselves as the true rulers of Bengal.

During Mogul rule the posts of Dewan and Subedar of Bengal respectively bestowed on different persons. Murshid Kuli Khan broke this custom and he himself alone occupied the two posts. During his time though revenue was regularly sent to the center, in later periods many stopped sending that. From the time of Alibardi Khan it stopped completely. In this perspective the emperor requested the company to receive stewardship of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa instead of annual gift. But the company did not care for this request at that time. But after the battle of Boxar in 1765 Clive coming to India for the second time, the situations changed.

Returning to the country, Clive at first paid attention to the defeated Nawab of Ajodha and the emperor of Delhi. He made alliance with the defeated Nawab of Ajodha. In return he took away the districts of Kara and Elahabad. As compensation of the battle he realized five million taka. On the other hand he signed two agreements attached with the conditions of dewany. One agreement was with Shah Alam, the emperor of Delhi. According to the agreement the dewany of Bengal, Bihar and Odisha was given to the company. In return, Nawab would send Tk. 26 lac to the Emperor. The company would be the guarantor of sending this money regularly.

The other treaty was signed with the immature son of Mirzafar, Nazimuddoula. Nawab complied with the conditions of getting dewany achieved through these treaties which increased the power of the company as monopoly. Nawab was now the pensioner of the company. The Emperor was also like that. All the power was occupied by the company. The income of the company as a result of dewany would suffice the expenditures of the company and would be able to be total capital of the business. Therefore, it can be said about the Importance of dewany that,

1. Achieving dewany by the company was not only a great political victory but also an economic victory.
2. Both emperor and Nawab turned to powerless rulers. Actually they became pension - holder employees of the company.

3. As a result of achieving dewany and because of duty-free trade as per conditions set by Nawab, the employees of the company became desperate. Their greed for money increased day by day. The local merchants and the general people started to become affected. Their economic backbone broke down completely.
4. As a result of achieving dewany a lot of money was being laundered to England from Bengal. The amount was so large that the field of industrial revolution of England was created by dint of this money.

**Group Work:** 'Achieving dewany is the most important event in the introduction of English rule.' (Group Debate)

### Dual Administration

Robert Clive gained mono poly authority of robbing wealth in the name of dewany certificate. The merchant company being given this immense power, there created a dual administration. As a result of this, the company gained authority free from responsibility and the Nawab turned to a powerless ruler whereas, the Nawab had to carry on full responsibility. As a result, there created an unprecedented administrative complexity in Bengal. The general people of the country had to pay for



Picture : Robert Clive

that. There was a fearful famine in the summer of 1770 which is known in history as 'monontor' of '76. In the words of Murshidabad representative of the company Richard Betcher, 'That the people alive are eating the dead people is not a rumor, but a fact'. One third of the people of Bengal had to face death in this famine.

The amount of annual revenue collected from 1765 to 1770 was nearly equivalent to the revenue collected in the year of famine. As a result, the people of Bengal became extremely poor and helpless due to extreme exploitation. In the dual system, the Nawab due to inadequate money, failed completely to run the administration. There started disorder all over the country. In this situation in 1772 Warren Hestings did away with the Dual Administration system.

### Permanent Settlement

Lord Cornwallis was sent with the charge of Governor General and army chief in 1786 to make the administration corruption free and organized. He introduced permanent settlement or permanent land system in 1793. On 22 March of the same year he gave permanent possession to the Zeminders of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa on their land. This settlement of land is called Permanent Settlement.

**Background**

Warren Hastings introduced five year settlement to collect revenue in 1772. Though the bid of land would be taken at a high rate, revenue would not be collected proportionately. There being a definite deadline, the Zeminders would realize the money from the farmers by oppressing them if necessary. They did not aim at developing the land and the condition of the farmers. As a result, the farmers in fear of oppression would leave the land and flee away. The land lying uncultivated for years, the prices of land would come down. In this situation Warren Hastings introduced settlement for one year with the Zeminders. In this system also government, zeminders and subjects --- none got benefits. In the later periods the parliament of England realized the necessity of inventing a new system to solve the revenue problem in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. In 1789 Cornwallis took preparation to give ten year settlement to the Zeminders. The authority of England having approved settlement with the Zeminders, Cornwallis introduced ten year settlement in this perspective in 1789. But with this, he also gave pledge that in case of the approval of the meeting of the company directors, ten year settlement would be the permanent settlement.

The settlement was approved by the Board of Directors in September of 1792. In 1793 Cornwallis declared ten year settlement as the Permanent Settlement.

**Features**

- Permanent settlement made the Zeminders permanent possessors of land and the Zeminders got the right of the possession of land.
- The amount of revenue being fixed, Zeminders gained permanent right to use the land in exchange of regular payment of revenue.
- As a result of the introduction of this system, the administrative power became extinct. The government itself took the responsibility of maintaining peace and safety.
- Gifts and sales fees were abolished.
- If the tax was outstanding, revenue would be collected by selling some parts of the land of Zeminders.

**Results**

Permanent Settlement cast far-reaching influence on the socio-economic structure of Bengal. Cornwallis himself was a Zeminder. He wanted to form a Zeminder class even in a country like England. But socio-economic structure of Europe and the subcontinent, and the fashion of its development were not the same. As a result, disadvantages rather than advantages were more noticed in this system imposed from outside.

**Advantages**

- The main advantage of this system was that the revenue earning of the government being fixed, the government could be sure of the amount of its income. As a result, implementation of budgets and various plans became easy for the government.
- As a result of Permanent Settlement, the newly created Zeminder class turned to be devoted supporters of the company. Consequently, the Zeminders were able to play an important role in steadying and strengthening British rule.
- The permanent possession of the Zeminders on land being recognized, many of them devoted themselves to do welfare activities in their respective areas. They built educational institutions, hospitals, prayer houses etc. in their respective areas. Besides, for the welfare of the subjects they constructed roads and bridges, and dug ponds including their participation in social activities.
- The Zeminders being the possessors of land, they made arrangements to cultivate unused land and the land covered with jungle. As a result, with the increase in production, the economic condition of the country was developed.
- The Permanent Settlement made the government popular and the rural society started to change due to the role of the Zeminder class in educational and cultural development of the society.

**Demerits**

As a result of Permanent Settlement, the interest of the Zeminders was well protected. They gradually turned to a wealthy class of people. On the other hand, the previous right of the subjects on land was abolished. As a result, a Zeminder can on his willingness oust them from land. In the beginning, since there was no law of public right, they had to depend on the Zeminders.

- In the Permanent Settlement there being no arrangement for accurate survey, many times more revenue would be imposed on the tax-free lands. There being no land demarcation, in the following periods there would be clashes and suits about land.
- Many big Zemindaries were destroyed due to strictness of paying the tax before sunset on a fixed date formulated in the Sunset Law. Excepting only the Zemindaries of Bardwan, other Zemindaries were destroyed in seven years.
- Being sure about Zemindary income and possession, the Zeminders started to live in cities leaving the responsibility on their rent-collectors and stewards. In absence of these Zeminders, the subjects became irritated at the oppression of their rent-collectors and stewards. As a result, the production of land started to decline, the economic condition of villages also started to worsen.

- The lands of the subcontinent were a symbol of aristocracy. As a result, many people of lower classes and general people who had been the owners of vast wealth by conducting business with the company became busy gaining dignity of aristocracy by buying Zemindary. Consequently, the possibility of the building up of local capital and industry was destroyed. On the other hand, the company also could avoid the probable competition in this country.

As a result of the Permanent Settlement, farmers started to be directly exploited by the Zeminders. Again with the patronage of this Zeminder class, an educated class was formed in the rural society who in the later periods became conscious about the country and nation. At the same time, the British made Zeminder class at the beginning was the strong foundation of the British Empire. But their subsequent generation educated in western education jumped into the independence movement to oust British monarchy.

**Individual Task:** How was the economy of Bengal affected by the Permanent Settlement?

## Questions for practice

### Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Which Portuguese sailor first came to the subcontinent by sea?  
(a) Vasco-da-gama (b) Captain Hawkins  
(c) Sir Thomas Roe (d) Jab Charnak
2. Nawab Sirajuddoula was bound to take up arms against the English in the field of Polashy because -
  - i. The English kept building fort defying the order of Nawab.
  - ii. The English refused to pay tax to the Nawab infringing the agreement.
  - iii. The Nawab expressed interest to occupy the wealth of the English.

Which one of the followings is correct?

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| (a) I and ii  | (b) ii and iii    |
| (c) I and iii | (d) I, ii and iii |

### Read the following passage and answer question 3 and 4:

It was long ago. Mr Rahman of Sylhet and his three friends taking a recommendation letter from the local Zeminder went to Africa and met the authority there with a view to getting commercial facilities. They took the bid of a village on the bank of a river and set up a commercial office there. The local authority gave Mr Rahman and his company right to conduct tax-free business.



3. Which European nation's commercial activities described in your text book likes to the activities of Mr Rahman and his friends?
- (a) Portuguese (b) Dutch  
(c) Danish (d) English
4. In the activities of aforesaid nations there were -
- appearing at the court of Emperor Akbar
  - building Fort William
  - gaining tax-free commercial priviledge

Which one of the followings is correct?

- (a) i and ii (b) i and iii  
(c) ii and iii (d) i, ii and iii

### **Creative Questions:**

- Mamun and Kamal are two brothers. After their father's death, there being a conflict between them about the ownership of their Star Garments, elder brother Mamun take the responsibility of running the Garments and younger brother Kamal took the responsibility of looking after the family. Disorder appeared in the family, Kamal not getting money from the income from the Garments for running the family.
  - Of which is the sailor Vasco-da-gama?
  - Why did many people come to Bengal to do business?
  - Which incident in your textbook likens to the division of power in the stimulant?
  - Do you think the aforesaid incident broke down the backbone of the economy of Bengal?
- The annual income of the Polashpur tea garden had been fluctuating for some days. For this reason the garden authority allocated the production system to some persons for some years to determine the income of the garden. In this system new bidders in the hope of making more profits compelled the tea workers to work more hours without more workers. As a result of this system the bidders did not aim at developing the tea garden and the workers. The garden authority made permanent settlement with the bidders in order to get rid of this distress.
  - On which bank of river did the battle of Polassy take place?
  - What does 'Andhakup Hottya' mean?
  - Which incident of your text book likens to the new system of the stimulant?
  - Do you think the said settlement played a helping role in the field of economic order.

## **Chapter Eight**

# **Resistance, Renaissance and Reform Movement in Bengal during British Rule**

Once, the farmers of Bengal used to rush to crop fields with ploughs on their shoulders at sun lighted dawns. They used to return home keeping the setting sun ahead. There was not plenty of rice and cloth; all the same there was no want at all. There was no want of joy and festivals. There were thirteen 'parbons'(programs /festivals) in twelve months. Evening rendezvous and sittings were sounded with jari, sari, kirton, jatrapala etc. But in the Eighth and the Ninth century the aggression of British merchants started to take away the smiles of their face, their joys and festivals.

At first they destroyed the cottage industry of the villages of Bengal. Then they cast their sight on the fertile land of this country. They kept experimenting one after another in imposing land tax for the greed of more money. The farmers and the general people were the cruel sacrifice of these experiments. As a result, victims of severe exploitation, helpless farmers and general people had no other alternative but to revolt. This revolt continued from the end of the 18th century to the second half of the 19th century.

Along with this revolt, a religious reform movement started in the Muslim society of Bengal which in the later stages took the form of a huge farmer's movement. Simultaneously, the waves of modern thoughts of the West burst into the educated part of the society. Consequently, as there took place renaissance in the field of art and literature, so there started a practice of free thought and free intellect. Reformation started in Hindu society averting superstitions and bigotry. The Muslim society also came forward to modernize Muslim community educating them in the western education through reformation. Basically, throughout the 18th and the 19th century a wind of change started to blow in the socio-economic politics of this region. This change was started by farmers, the general people of Bengal.

**At the end of this chapter we will be able to-**

- explain the perspective and significance of the resistance movement in Bengal during British rule;
- evaluate the contributions of particular persons to renaissance and reform movement;
- be inspired in patriotism through a flow of events of battle and resistance movement against British rule;
- be inspired in free thought through knowing about different reformers and reform activities.

## Resistance Movement

### Fakir-Monk Movement

The Fakir-monk movement of Bengal was a movement against the British. This movement started in the second half of the 18th century. Before that Nawab Mir Kashim wanted help from fakirs and monks in the battle against the English. Responding to this call, fakirs and monks fought in favour of the Nawab. Though Mir Kashim fled away being defeated in the battle, fakirs and monks continued their movement against the British. Since they helped the Nawab, the English kept an eye on their activities.

According to traditional practice, fakirs and monks lived on alms. They would travel from one place to another on the occasions of religious festivals and pilgrimage. They had with them light arms for their safety. They had been free and independent before the establishment of British rule in Bengal. But the British government kept interrupting their unrestricted movement. They imposed tax on pilgrimage and declared begging as illegal. Besides, they called them robbers and pirates. As a result, fakirs and monks took part in a long-standing movement against the English. The name of the leader of rebellious fakir groups was Majnu Shah. And the name of the leader of the monks was Bhabani Pathak. The targets of their attack were Zeminder's court of law, houses of tax collectors. The monks first started rebellion against the English in the district of Bardwan of West Bengal in 1760.

Majnu Shah started activities against the English in the whole of North Bengal in 1771. Majnu Shah was locked in many collisions with the English in the districts of Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dinajpur and Mymensingh from 1777 to 1786. And his fighting strategy was guerilla method i.e. sudden attack and sneak away in safety. It was never possible to defeat him completely in any fight against the English. He died in 1787. Then fakirs Musa Shah, Sohban Shah, Cherag Ali, Karim Shah including Mother Bakhs took the leadership of the rebellion. These leaders kept English administration unsettled for some years. In 1800 they were completely defeated. On the other hand Bhabani Pathak, the leader of monk rebellion was killed along with two assistants by a group of British soldiers under the leadership of Lieutenant Brenan in 1887. He was the main leader of monk rebellion. Monk movement came to an end with his death.

**Individual Work:** What is the relation between strict observation of the English towards fakirs and monks and the defeat of Mir Kashim? What were its consequences ?

### The fight of Titumir

Mir Nisar Ali alias Titumir was born in the village Chandpur in Barasat subdivision in the district of Chabbish Pargana. When there was a tide of Wahabi Movement going on in North India and North-west border province, this movement took a violent shape under the leadership of Titumir in the region of Barasat in West Bengal. In the 19th century in India a religious reformation movement started in



Picture : Titumir

Bengal - one was famous Wahabi or Muhammadia Movement and the other was famous as Faraizi Movement. The main purpose of both of the movements was to direct the Muslims to the true paths of following religious edicts by eradicating religious superstitions from the society. The Wahabis organized themselves under the leadership of Titumir. Tarikaye Muhammadia Movement led by Titumir was imbued with the ideology of Sir Sayed Ahmed Shaheed of north India.

Titumir went to Mecca to perform Haj. He returned home in 1827 and devoted himself to religious activities. His religious reformation movement was responded by many Muslims especially by many farmers, weavers of Chabbish Pargana and the district of Nadia. As a result, the Zeminders put various kinds of injunctions on Muslim tenants and started oppressive behavior with them. Titumir failed in getting peaceful justice from the authority against this oppression. At last he and his followers adopted the path of armed resistance. Titumir set up his first base in the village Narikelbaria in 1831. He built a strong bamboo fort. He formed a skilled strong battalion of stick-fighters under the leadership of Golam Rasul.

Farmers, oppressed by the English, Zeminders and indigo-planters, joined the battalion of Titumir in groups. Thus the movement of religious reformation turned into a huge farmers' movement. As a result, ruling and exploiting Zeminder class were alarmed at the unity of the farmers and the increase in the strength of Titumir. At last, the government sent a large educated army against Titumir in 1831. This army led by Major Scott attacked Titumir's bamboo fort of Narikelbaria. Titumir's battalion was defeated fighting with heroism facing guns and canons. The bamboo fort was blown away by the blows of canons. Thus an organized farmers' movement came to an end. Titumir was able to form a huge farmer's movement through religious reformation movement. His bamboo fort was the symbol of the united resistance against bullets and blows of the English, indigo-planters and Zeminders which provided the Bengalis with courage against different oppression and injustice from time to time; encouraged them to go ahead on the paths of freedom.

**Individual Work:**

1. Which activities of Titumir are the symbol of courage and patriotism?
2. How did religious reformation movement turn into a farmers' movement? Find out the reasons behind it.

**Indigo Revolt**

The English came to this country to do business. With the advantage of the weaknesses of the rulers of the subcontinent, they became the rulers of this country. But they were always alert with their business acumen. Due to this alert business acumen their sight fell on the fertile land of crops. They became interested in producing commercial crops rather than food crops in these fertile lands. Indigo was that commercial crop of theirs. At that time indigo business was very lucrative. In fact, with the progress of industry in order to dye clothes the demand of indigo in

England rose so high. Besides, due to British colonies in America being independent, indigo cultivation by the English merchants ceased there. As a result, Bengal became the main center of indigo supply. Indigo cultivation started in Bangladesh in British rule between 1770 and 1780.

The indigo planters would select the best lands of the farmers for indigo cultivation. They would compel the farmers to take advanced money for indigo cultivation. And the advance money once taken, the farmers could never pay off the loan even generation after generation. The farmers not agreeing to indigo cultivation would be inflicted extreme oppression. The English merchants did the monopoly business of indigo. Indigo would be cultivated widely in Faridpur, Jessore, Dhaka, Pabna, Rajshahi, Nadia and Murshidabad.

With the increase in prices of things, the cost of indigo production also increased. The indigo-planters did not consider the case. Besides, though in the beginning they supplied seeds to the farmers free of cost; they stopped supplying that in the later stages. As a result, indigo production gradually became impossible for the farmers.

There was no means of liberating the farmers from deprivation after. Law was beyond their catch. Most of those who would enforce laws were friends of indigo-planters or came from the same country. Again, many times the indigo -planters would be appointed as honorary magistrates. So, the farmers could not take shelter of law or get any justice. Under the circumstances, the indigo-planters exposed themselves not only as merchants in the villages but also as very powerful strange oppressive Zaminders. They got so cruel and desperate that they did not hesitate to kill the disobedient farmers.

The indigo cultivators having no other means to resist the oppression of the English burst into tremendous revolt in 1859. Farmers in villages started to get organized and united. All the revolts were led by indigo cultivators themselves. The leaders of the indigo revolt in Jessore were two brothers - Nabin Madhab and Beni Madhab. Baidyanath and Biswanath Sarder led the revolt in Hoogly. Megha Sarker was in the leadership in Nadia. The fire of farmers' revolt was kindled in Bengal in the local level. The farmers took their firm position not to cultivate indigo. Even they defied the advice of English magistrate. The people of educated middle class started to express their sympathetic attitude towards the farmers. Reports on the oppression by the indigo-planters on the farmers continued to be published in different newspapers. The story of the play 'Nildarpan' written by Dinobandhu Mitra spread too far and wide.

At last the struggling farmers of Bengal won the victory. In 1861 British government formed Indigo Commission. Based on the recommendation of the commission indigo cultivation was declared as 'under the will' of the farmers. Besides, indigo contract was abolished. In this perspective, indigo revolt came to an end. In the later periods, artificial indigo alternative to original indigo having been invented, indigo cultivation ceased for good.

- Individual Work:** 1. Prepare a case study on the perspective on which indigo revolt took place.
2. Show the background of the end of indigo cultivation in Bengal forever.

### **Faraizi Movement**

The founder of Faraizi Movement Hazi Shariatullah was born in the village Shashail in the district of Faridpur in 1782. He stayed in Mecca for long twenty years. He became a profound scholar studying there on Islam.

Returning home he came to understand that the Muslims of Bengal have moved away too far from the real teachings of Islam. Non-Islamic practices, superstitions, malpractices have engulfed into them. He was determined to make Islam free from superstitions and these non-Islamic malpractices. Out of this determination in the first half of the 19th century he brought about the beginning of a religious and social reformation movement among the Muslims. The name of this religious reformation movement of Shariatullah is called Faraizi Movement.

The word Faraizi has come from Arabic word 'Faraz' (bounden duty). Those who perform 'Faraj' are called Faraizi and those who were the followers of Hazi Shariatullah in Bengal are called Faraizi in history. The 'Faraz' on which Shariatullah put emphasis were five bounden principles described in the holy Quran. These fundamental principles are belief in the uniqueness of Allah and the conveying of divine messages of Prophet Muhammad, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage (Haj) and 'Jakat'. He called upon the Muslim society to perform ever what are obligatory to be done in Islam, giving up all non-Islamic beliefs, practices and manners and ceremonies. He could not comply with the British rule in Bengal that is in India. He looked down upon the English rule. He declared Bengal even India as 'Darul Harab' (country in war). He directed the Muslims to give up 'Zuma' and prayer of two Eids in the country ruled by the rulers of other religions and countries.

The exploited, oppressed poor 'rayat', farmers, weavers and 'teli' communities spontaneously joined this movement. The faith and belief of the poor people on Shariatullah and his extraordinary success formed a firm unity among the people of lower classes. The Zaminders started to put hindrances on the religious ceremonies and practices of the Muslims. He advised the tenants to refrain from paying illegal tax and took preparation to form resistance against all oppression of Zaminders. There being want all over the country, he also placed the demand of rice and salt.

When the Zaminders started oppressing the Faraizi followers on different excuses, he decided to form a stick-fighting battalion to protect the tenants. In 1839 a police injunction was imposed on him. He died in 1840. After his death, his worthy son Muhammad Muhsinuddin Ahmed alias Dudu Mia took the charge of Faraizi Movement. He was born in 1819. Though he was not so erudite like his father, his organizing capacity was extraordinary.

**Individual work:** Make a list of 'Faraz' (bounden duties) on which Hazi Shariatullah put emphasis.

Faraizi Movement under the leadership of Dudu Mia at the same time turned into an armed struggle of freedom from exploitation of the peasantry side by side of a religious reformation movement. As a result, the character of this movement was not



at last confined only to religious reform movement. The farmers upset with extreme economic exploitation of the English rulers took part in anti-exploitation direct role through this movement. Thousands of farmers and Zaminders joined the movement in order to survive from the oppression of indigo-planters.

Dudu Mia was the master of the Faraizis. After the death of his father he resorted to armed struggle giving up his father's peaceful principle. He learned how to move sticks to steady and strengthen the resistance struggle of the Faraizis. He formed a skilled stick fighting battalion by employing Jalaluddin Mollah, a stick fighter of his father's time as the chief of army. Its purpose was to arrange resistance against illegal tax imposed by the Zaminders and oppression of indigo-planters. It is mentionable here that Faridpur, Pabna, Rajshahi, Jessore, Murshidabad, Nadia etc. regions inhabited by chiefly Muslims were the best for indigo cultivation. So, the degree of oppression of the indigo planters were also intolerable. Independent government was formed under his leadership in villages. An army (stick fighting battalion) of the independent government was also formed of tenants who were farmers.

East Bengal was divided into some areas in the government system of the Faraizis. Dudu Mia together with his followers continued struggle for a long time against the Zaminders and the indigo-planters. Local Zaminders in alliance with foreign rulers and indigo-planters kept lodging criminal cases against him. But they had to acquit him for want of witnesses. At last in 1857 the first of Indian independence war having been kindled, the British government was intimidated. The alarmed British government detained Dudu Mia as political captive. He came out of the prison in 1860 and this revolting patriot died in 1862. After his death Faraizi Movement became weak for want of competent leadership.

**Individual Work:** Alarmed during the independence war of India in 1857, the British government imprisoned Dudu Mia. Arrange its causes in sequence.

## **Renaissance and Reform Movement**

### **Renaissance**

After the battle of Palashi in 1757, there was a far-reaching implication of economic and political changes in this region. Again, the last half Industrial Revolution in England and blood shedding French Revolution also influenced politics and economy of this region. At that time some people of Bengal came in contact with these revolutionary changes. They themselves introduced renaissance. The influence of European socio-economy and politics introduced renaissance in the minds of the educated people of Bengal. Under the influence of their leadership, self-consciousness, sense of self-dignity and sense of individuality were acutely aroused in the countrymen. At last the influence of renaissance itself laid the primary foundation of nationalist spirit in the countrymen which to the last took the people of Bengal that is the Indians to the way of independence.

At this time there was a beginning of the revolution of a kind of thought against religions in vogue, education and culture, literature, social customs and practices, and heritage. As consequences, there took birth new religious doctrine (brammah religion and new Hinduism), new education, new literature, new social ideals and practices. The origin of renaissance in Bengal took place in these very novelties. As a result, Bengal became the center of modern thoughts and spirit in whole India. The Bengalees turned to be the custodians of western civilization and culture under the influence of English education and western trends of thoughts. Many of the intellectuals of Bengal gave up the thoughts of the Middle Age and turned into modern humans by embracing rationalism, individual liberty and scientific outlook. Some generous administrators of the East India Company had contributions to the spread of the new trend of thoughts. They showed great interest in the development of local language and literature. Many of the English administration headed by Hestings, Alfinstone, Malcolm Monroe, Metkaf thought it their moral and humanistic duty and responsibility to revive the people of India with western trends of thought, and scientific knowledge and philosophy. Besides, printing press founded by Christian missionaries also was able to contribute to the spread of the thoughts of modern education.

### **Raja Rammohan Roy**

Raja Rammohan Roy, the creator of renaissance of Bengal was the first modern man of India. He was born in the village Radhanagar in the district of Hoogly. Rammohan Roy had extraordinary erudition. He gained great mastery especially over Arabic, French, Urdu, Latin and Greek language. He published the translations of 'Vedantasutra' and 'Vedantasar'. His other writings included 'Tuhfatul Muzahhiddeen' (belief in singleness of God) 'Manzaratul Adian' (discussion on different religions), Justice with Bhattacharya, imagistic religious methods of the Hindus etc. Besides, he was the publisher of three magazines 'Sambad Kaumodi' 'Miratul Akhbar' and 'Brahmmanikal Magazine'.



Picture: Raja Rammohan Roy

Raja Rammohan Roy, the transformer of modern India deeply observed the social and political trends of the then society. He endeavored to build up a new society in the light of his own trends of thinking. He made efforts to abolish 'satidaha', child marriage, caste system, image worshipping and other superstitions of Hindu Society. Besides, he wanted to rebuild Hinduism based on the ancient belief in the singleness of God by removing all superstitions. He formed an association named 'Atmio Sabha' (Meeting of the relatives) with a view to preaching the reformation of Hinduism that is his own religious doctrine. He established the society of Brahmins on 20 August in 1828. He founded the prayer house of the society of the Brahmins in 1830. His establishment of the society of the Brahmins opened a new age in the religious history of the subcontinent. He contributed not only to social and religious affairs but also to the spread of education. He believed that English was necessary for the countrymen. For this reason, despite being a scholar in Sanskrit, he opposed establishing proposed Government Sanskrit College. Raja Rammohan Roy established 'Anglo Hindu

School' in 1822, where there was arrangement for teaching English, Philosophy, and modern science. He wrote a letter to Lord Amhurst explaining the importance of teaching science and philosophy instead of Sanskrit education. Besides, he applied to spend Tk. one lac, allocated by the Indian government for the Indians, in modern education instead of Sanskrit and Madrasa education.

This great man, the creator of Indian renaissance Raja Rammohan Roy died in 1833. His dream came true after two years of his death. The government decision to educate the Indians in western language was approved.

**Task:** Make a list of the books written and magazines published by Raja Rammohan Roy.

### **Dirogio and Young Bengal Movement**

Henry Louis Dirogio was born in Calcutta (Kolkata) on 18 April in 1809. His father was Portuguese and his mother was Bengali. Dirogio started to receive education at Dharmatala Academy of David Dramond, an English school. The head teacher of the school was a progressive, non-superstitious, secular minded, humanistic and very devoted teacher. The ideals of this teacher kept him influenced from his childhood till his death. For that reason, he could become in the later period a competent ancestor of Raja Rammohan Roy. He was the initiator of 'East Bengal' Movement stirring the young generation in the age of renaissance. His foresightedness, eloquence and analytic power influenced the then young generation greatly.

The first half of the 19th century was full of the trends of movement of Raja Rammohan Roy. The brilliant students of Hindu College kept that trend alive firmly through East Bengal Movement. Henry Louis Dirogio was the leader of that movement. He taught his students and followers to express their free opinions.

The members of the East Bengal Movement time and again wanted to mean this that they were being ruled and exploited by the British. This is why these youths completely opposed the activities opposing the interests of the Indians. For example, they sharply criticized the Press Law, export of Indian labour to Mauritius, Charter Law of 1833 indifferent to the interests of the Indians.

In order to change the old thinking of the young generation, Academy Association established in 1828 by Dirogio played an important role. The youths of the academy were taught this lesson that irrational belief is equivalent to death. The youths influenced by the new thinking hit the religious belief of old-fashioned Hindus and Christian bigots. As a result, they got furious with Dirogio and the members of his academy. The students of Hindu College inspired by Dirogio published an English magazine named 'Parthenon' in 1830. Censuring criticism having been published in this magazine, the college authority stopped its publication. He edited a magazine named 'Hispanas' and published a daily named 'East India' in 1831. He died in December that year at the age of twenty three.

Even after his death, his followers shaped by himself kept going on his shown paths. After the death of Dirogio, his student followers kept contributing to different fields. The remarkable among them were Ramtanu Lahiri, Radhanath Sikder, Parichand Mitra, Krishnomohan Banarjee. Though Michael Modhusudan Dutt was not his student, he was deeply influenced by his ideals. The movement of the followers of Dirogio also influenced Inswardchandra Vidyasagar.

**Individual Work :** 'Irrational belief is equivalent to death' - Evaluate the activities of Dirogio in the light of this statement.

### **Iswarchandra Vidyasagar**

Iswarchandra Vidyasagar was the personality in Bengal of the 19th century in scholarship, spread of education, social reformation and spiritedness. His erudition was like that of Indian saints, power like that of the English and heart like that of delicate mothers of Bengal.

This extraordinary epoch maker was born in 1820 in the village of Birsingha in the district of Medinipur. He inherited his spiritedness, truthfulness from his indigent Brahmin father Thakurdas Banarjee. He inherited soft-heartedness from his mother Bhagabati Devi. Due to poverty he had not the ability to study lighting the lamp. As a result, child Iswarchandra would study under the lamp-post of the road after evening till late at night. He learned counting English number on the way to Kotkata from his village with his father, counting the roadside milestones.



Picture: Vidyasagar

He acquired unfathomable erudition in Sanskrit literature, grammar, ethics, Vedanta, the Smriti, rhetoric, etc. only at the age of twenty one by dint of his extraordinary genius and perseverance. He took the post of Pundit in Fort William College at this age. At the same time, he performed the responsibility of school inspector.

He also became attentive to the practice of literature with his entrance to professional life. He started to write prose literature, seeing the shortage of quality text books. He gave a new life to the prose literature. That is why he is called the father of prose literature. In order to ease children's study, he wrote the 1st phase and the 2nd phase of alphabet identification. He wrote a preface in order to ease Sanskrit language. Besides, he translated many books.

Not only literature, his achievement is extraordinary in the spread of education. His indestructible achievement is in reformation of Sanskrit education, foundation of Bengali education and pioneering role in the spread of female education. Besides, he built twenty model schools and thirty five girls' schools in villages and towns during his position of school inspector. Metropolitan Institution is remarkable among the academic institutions established by him. It is now famous as Vidyasagar College.

He was also a successful social reformer. He made resistance against different types of superstitions in vogue in the country. He was involved in struggle against killing female babies and the custom of polygamy. He took strict position in favour of widow marriage in Hindu society. The law of widow marriage was passed in 1856 by the ascent of Governor General due to his diligent efforts.

Bidyasagar was famous for charity. This is why he is also called the sea of kindness. Though he was not adequately solvent, many students would pursue education staying in his house. During extreme hard up of Michael Modhusudan Dutt, he succored him with much money. Poet Nabin Chandra Sen in his youth received his education by the money of Vidyasagar.

His devotion to mother was extraordinary. He built charitable hospitals and schools at the will of his mother. To respond to the call of his mother he once rushed to her by crossing the Damodor River swimming in a full rainy season.

This social worker and great scholar died in 1891 at the age of 71.

**Individual Work:** Look into the causes of calling Vidyasagar the father of prose literature.

### **Hazi Mohammad Mohsin**

Hazi Mohammad Mohsin was born in 1732 in Hoogly in West Bengal. His father's name was Muhammad Faizullah. His mother's name was Jaynab Khanam. Their original abode was in Persia. The predecessors of Hazi Mohammad Mohsin came to Hoogly in search of good luck and started living there.

The educational life of Mohsin started in Hoogly. His private tutor Aga Siraji was a scholar. He learned Arabic and French from him. He learned playing three-stringed musical instrument ('setar') and music from a musician named Bholanath Ostad. His higher education started in

Murshidabad. After the death of his father he returned to Hoogly and came out to travel different countries. He went to Mecca and Madina and performed pilgrimage (Haj). He returned home after traveling Arab, Egypt and Persia for 27 years. He had profound scholarship in Arabic, French, Urdu, English and History as well as Algebra.

His only sister having died in 1803, he became the possessor of vast property. He lived a very simple life. Then the Muslims of Bengal were in extreme hard up. They had no ability to pursue their education by spending money. He spent all his money in the spread of education and for the poor.

He built a school in Hoogly. He gave a lot of money to develop 'madrasas' in different places like Dhaka, Chittagong, Jessore etc. Six years before his death in 1806 he bestowed all his property for welfare activities, forming a fund. With the money from Mohsin Fund after his death in 1836 Hoogly Mohsin College Fund, Hoogly



Picture: Hazi Mohammad Mohsin

Charitable Hospital and in 1848 Imambara in Hoogly were established. Thousands of Muslim youths got the opportunity of higher education at the money from Mohsin Fund. Among them was also Sir Amir Ali who was the pioneer of the Muslim society of Bengal whom he showed the way of western education. Thus even after his death he paved the way of education for the Muslims of Bengal. This charitable, fond of learning, great man died in Hoogly on 29 November in 1812.

**Work :** Make a list in which welfare activities the money of Hazi Mohammad Mohsin has been spent.

### **Nawab Abdul Latif**

Abdul Latif was born in the district of Faridpur. He received English education in Kolkata Madrasa. After the completion of his education, he taught at first in Dhaka Collegiate School and then Kolkata Madrasa. He joined the position of Deputy Magistrate in 1849. He was promoted to the post of Kolkata Presidency Magistrate in 1877. He retired from government service in 1884. Government conferred on him the titles at first Khan Bahadur and then Nawab for his achievement in his professional life.

He could understand the necessity of the spread of English education among the Muslims of Bengal and the importance of their English education. So, he made efforts for their welfare educating the Muslims of Bengal in modern education. To this end, he arranged an essay competition entitled 'The benefits of English education for Muslim students' in 1853 in order to form public opinion. Anglo-Persian Department was opened in Kolkata Madrasa at his attempts. An arrangement of learning Urdu and Bengali was also made there. He placed to the government the problems of Muslim students in receiving higher education. Hindu College having been transformed into Presidency College at his attempts, the Muslim students got the opportunity of pursuing their education there. He built madrasas in different places like Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong etc. The decision that money from Mohsin Fund would be spent only for the Muslims of Bengal was approved in 1873 at the efforts of Abdul Latif. In the madrasas established by him, English and modern western education was introduced together with religious education. The remarkable achievement of Abdul Latif is Mohammedan Literary Society established in 1863.

The main purpose of the life-long activities of Abdul Latif was three:

1. To remove malice of British Government against the Muslims;
2. To take necessary steps for the development and progress of the Muslim society; and
3. To establish alliance between Hindu community and Muslim community.

**Individual Work :** Elaborate in brief the purposes of the activities of Abdul Latif.

### **Syed Ameer Ali**

In the last half of 19th century the person who made the most important contribution to the renaissance of the Muslim society of Bengal was Sir Amir Ali. He wanted to make social and mundane development of the Muslims of Bengal through western education. Side by side, he wanted to make them politically conscious.

Syed Ameer Ali was born in a noble Muslim family in Hoogly in 1849. He obtained M.A. and B.L from Calcutta University. He passed Bar at law from Lincolns Inn of London in 1873 and returned home. He was positioned in different responsible posts in his working life. He was employed as a judge of Kolkata High Court in 1890. He became a member of Privy Council in London in 1909.

He was the first Muslim leader in Bengal in other words in India who believed that there should be a political organization for the Muslims. He believed that there should be a respective political organization for the interests of the Muslims and to draw attention of the government to their demands. For this purpose he formed an association named Central Mohammedan Association in Kolkata in 1877.

He wrote in different dailies and magazines about the Muslims falling back in education and in different fields. As a result, the government took some steps for the progress of education of the Muslims in 1885. This is why he encouraged English education at the college level at Kolkata Madrasa and established a college in Karachi in 1884.

Scientific explanation and the past glory of Islam have been upheld in his two famous books 'The Spirit of Islam' and 'A Short History of Saracens'. He believed that Hindu and Muslim - both the communities are required to work together for the development of modern India. He welcomed the establishment of Muslim League in 1906. He was elected secretary of Muslim League in 1912. Syed Ameer Ali was also conscious about the rights of women.

**Individual Work:** Make a list of what Syed Ameer Ali did for the progress of the Muslims.

### **Begum Rokeya**

At the beginning of the 20th century when the light of education was burning in houses, Muslim girls of Bengal were still fallen back. The girls of Muslim society were deprived of all rights. Receiving education was almost restricted for them. They would be kept as house-arrested behind the curtain in the name of social religion.

The person who called for the freedom of Muslim girls from their captivity was Begum Rokeya. She was born in the village Payrabandh in the upazila of Mithapukur in the district of Rangpur. Her father's name was Jahiruddin Mohammad Abu Ali Saber. Her mother's name was Mst. Bahatanesa Sabera Chowdhurani. In this region, Saber family was very noble and conservative. The girls were very careful of not exposing themselves. Begum Rokeya received education from her elder brother Ibrahim Saber and elder sister Karimunnisa. She had to study very late at night so that nobody could sense that. She learned Urdu, Arabic, French, Bengali and English at the sincere encouragement of her elder brother. Though she could not receive education at school, she achieved much proficiency in Bengali. She concentrated on the practice of literature from her very young age.

The theme of her practice of literature was women folk. She had witnessed the superstitions of the society, witnessed the pathetic pictures of deprivation and



Picture: Begum Rokeya



negligence of women folk. She expressed in her writings what she realized. She wanted to point to the society the pathetic condition of women and discriminatory treatment delivered to them. Her books 'Aborodhbasini', 'Padmoraag', 'Matichur', 'Sultanar Shapno' (Dream of Sultana) etc. bear those pictures.

In her marital life, she got encouragement from her husband to practise knowledge. After the death of her husband, she passed rest of her life in female education and social work. She built a primary girls' school in Bhagalpur in the name of her husband. She established Shakhawat Memorial Urdu Primary School in Kolkata in 1911. It was raised to Girls' English High School in 1931. Till her death she simultaneously carried out the responsibilities of head teacher and superintendent.

For the establishment of the rights of women she established 'Anjuman Khawatine Islam' (Muslim Women Association) in Kolkata in 1916. The association was able to play a strong role in female education, employment and in establishing legal rights under her leadership.

The pioneer of Women Freedom Movement, Begum Rokeya had an acute tune of revolt in her heart against various oppression and intolerance of the society towards women. She expressed that in her works. This great woman died in Kolkata in 1932.

**Individual Work:** Make a list of books written by Begum Rokeya mentioning the pathetic condition of women.

**Extempore Speech:** Extempore speech about reformers of the Renaissance Movement (selection through lottery).

## Questions for Practice

### Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Who was the publisher of the magazine 'Sambad Kaumodi'?
  - (a) Michael Modhusudan Dutt
  - (b) Iswarchandra Bidyasagar
  - (c) Raja Rammohan Roy
  - (d) Hazi Shariatullah
2. Fakirs and monks were involved in long-standing movement against the British, because the British -
  - (a) considered them dacoits and pirates
  - (b) imposed tax on visiting the places of pilgrimage
  - (c) hindered their movement and activities

Which one of the followings is correct?

- (a) i and ii
- (b) i and iii
- (c) ii and iii
- (d) i, ii and iii

### Read the stimulant and answer question 3 and 4:

The people of the village Rasulpur have become used to different types of superstitions and non-Islamic practices due to the want of conscious and religiously well-educated persons. A man named Abdullah came forward to inform the superstitious people of this area of the right paths.



## **Chapter Nine**

# **Movement for Right to Self Determination in Bengal During British Period**

The Bengalees never accepted the foreign English rulers. As a result the peasants of this country grew rebellious immediately after the war at Palashi. The soldiers and the kings (or feudal lords) of the country declared the independence of the country after a hundred years. Afterwards the young people educated in the western manner raised a great movement for independence and right to self determination. The young people of Bengal shook the foundation of English rulers by introducing a sort of armed struggle. In the struggles for independence and self governance of the subcontinent they played the most dignified role. The history of the pride and sacrifice of the Bengalis and also of the Indians in the first struggle for independence in 1857 has been discussed in this chapter.

**After the end of this chapter we will be able to-**

- evaluate the struggles for the achievements of the Political movement and right to self determination in Bengal and its consequent results.
- curious to learn about the different movements.
- interest to exchange views on the social and political rights.

### **The independence struggle in 1857**

The great armed movement led mainly by the common soldiers or sipahis which developed in the Northern and Eastern parts of India a hundred of years after the war at Palashi is called the first independence movement of India. The long political and economic injustice, social dishonour, violation of the religious sentiment, and above all, a disparity towards the Indian soldiers- all these created the background of great mutiny or the first independence struggle. The reasons behind the first independence struggle are stated below.

**Political:** Since the war at Palashi the imperialistic attitude of the East India Company such as acquiring the native states one after another under different pretexts gave birth of fear, dissatisfaction and sheer agitation among the native kings. According to the policy of Ownership Extinction Act, Lord Dalhousie included the native states like Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur, Sambalpur, Vagat, Udoypur etc. within the territory of the British empire. According to the Ownership Extinction Act an adopted son was not considered the lawful heir of the crown or wealth. The honourariums of the Nabab of Karnataka, the adopted son of the king of Tanjore and the adopted son of King Baji Rao 2 of Peshwa were stopped under this provision. Even the loyal Nabab of Awodhya also could not escape this aggressive step of the British rulers. Awodhya was brought under the empire on the excuse of misuse of powers. All these annoyed the native Kings very much. It also made Bahadur Shah, the second angry because due to this decision he could not remain as the emperor of Delhi.

**Individual Work:** Make a list of the native states acquired to the British empire adopting the ownership Extinction Act.

**Economic:** An extreme economic aggression developed as soon as the rule of the East India Company developed. The Company had destroyed the native industries before acquiring political power. After the acquisition of power by the East India Company the economic backbone of the peasants was also destroyed in the name of the Land Revenue Policy. Many Zamindars or the feudal lords were thus damaged and socially undermined.

The peasants were the worst victims of it. In one hand, there was excessive imposition of tax upon them. On the other hand, they became the victims of the extreme exploitation of the land lords and the revenue collectors. The peasants became ruined by borrowing from the money lenders. The peasants had to undergo many types of tortures.

Gradually the agriculture sector was destroyed totally. There was destruction of the local industries in the name of capturing the market. Besides with a view to acquiring more profits lands were given lease. As a result, the economic structure of Bengal ruined absolutely. The common people who were the victims of this circumstance became rebellious against the rule and torture of the company.

**Social and religious:** One of the most important reasons behind the mass upsurge in this sub-continent was religious and social. Though the influence of the west and the social reformations were benevolent for the people during the last part of the 18th and the early 19th century, the conservative Hindus and Muslims could not approve these reforms. English education, the extinction of the Satidaha, re-marriage of the Hindu widows, the preaching of the Christian priests etc. made the Hindu and Muslim conservatives afraid. Various social and religious reformations infuriated the believers in both of the religions.

**Military:** The distinction between the Indian and the British soldiers in the army was one of the main reasons behind the Sipoy mutiny. There was a vast gap in salary and rank between the Indian and the British soldiers in the army. The Indians were less privileged. Besides they were also deprived of their promotions. Moreover the partiality and disproportionate behavior of the British officers inflamed the fire of mutiny among the soldiers.

The direct reason behind the mutiny was the attack on the religious belief of the soldiers. The Hindu soldiers firmly believed that they would lose their religion in case of crossing the sea. In that case, the Hindu sepoys were compelled to go across the sea. Besides a new type of rifles, called Enfield was introduced for the use of both Hindu and Muslim soldiers. The bullets of this weapon were to be inserted in the gun after the cartridges were removed by the teeth. A rumour went in rampart that those cartridges were mixed with the fat of the cows and the pigs. As a result, soldiers of both the religions grew rebellious as they believed that the act was sacrilegious.

**Struggles for Independence:** The first flame of independence grew at Barrackpur in the West Bengal. A sepoy named Mongol Pandey started the mutiny by firing a gun shot. It extended in the whole Indian subcontinent including Meerut, Kanpur, Panjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and the Bengal or Bangla. In Bangladesh the mutiny took place in Dhaka, Chittagong, Jessore, Sylhet, Rangpur, Dinajpur and Rajshahi.

**Individual Work:** Draw a map of Bangladesh and show the places where this movement spread.

The mutineers declared Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II as the emperor of India. Many aggrieved and deprived Indians like Nana Shahib, the Queen of Jhansi Laxmi Bai, Begum Hazrat Mahol of Aodhya, Moulovi Ahmadullah and other native feudal lords also took part in this war. The Indian sepoys and rebel soldiers tasted defeat after fighting hard. Most of the participants in the war were either killed or hanged.

Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah II was exiled in Rengun (Myanmar). Queen Laxmi Bai was killed in the war. Nana Shaheb disappeared after the defeat. The defeated soldiers faced inhuman tortures. The dead bodies of the defeated soldiers were seen hanging at the Bahadur Shah Park in Dhaka. The rulers created such a brutal event with a view to exciting terror among the people. Thus the first struggle for Indian independence ended amid cruelty and torture. Everything ended within July 1858 though the event left a far reaching impact.



Picture: Bahadur Shah Park

**The significance of the first struggle for independence:** This mutiny had an instant significance. This ended the rule of the Company. The British government took over the responsibility of ruling India itself.

The Abolition of Right Law and its related rules were declared null and void on 1 November 1858 by a proclamation of Queen Victoria. It also ensured the employment of the Indians, and their religious freedom as well as an amnesty for the mutineers.

Bahadur Shah II was exiled in Rengun (Myanmar) A long term impact of this mutiny was that the grievance did not stop. People became conscious in the consequence of this mutiny and the English rule ended in 1947 after various movements and struggles.

**Individual Work:** Point out the consequence for which the sepoys declared mutiny in India in 1857.

### **Bangavanga (Partition of Bengal, 1905 -1911)**

The impact of the Separation of Bengal was long. The communal harmony between the Hindus and Muslims was destroyed for ever because of the separation of the Bengal. They began to consider each other as enemies. The level of disbelief increased between the two. Though the liberal efforts of the leaders, various combined programs etc. often brightened the prospect of the re-establishment of unity, ultimately the divide and rule policy of the British government succeeded. The disbelief and enmity of the two communities ended with the division of India in 1947.

**Background of Partition of Bengal :** The Governor General of India Lord Curzon divided Bengal on October 16 in 1905. This division is known as the Partition of Bengal or Bongvongo in history. Before the division the Bengal Province or the Bangla Presidency consisted of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and some parts of Assam. The plan to divide Bengal started much earlier. Since the area of Bengal Presidency was too large, various proposals for the rescheduling its area was presented from 1853 to 1903 in the British government circle. In the true sense the plan to divide Bengal was accepted in 1903. The Secretary for India approved it in 1904 and the plan became public in the July of 1904. The plan was implemented in October in the same year. According to this plan the East Bengal and Assam province was created with Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong of Bangladesh, Assam, Jolpaiguri, Tripura Hills and Maldoh. Dhaka became the capital of this province. On the other hand, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa made the West Bengal which had its capital in Kolkata.

**Reasons behind the partition :** There were a number of reasons behind the division, which are stated below.

**Administrative Reasons :** During the period of Lord Curzon the division of Bengal was an administrative reformation. One third of the population of India lived in Bangla Presidency. It was hard to run the law and order situation and lead administration in the eastern part properly from Kolkata. This was why Curzon considered it an irrational task to keep such a vast area in a single administrative unit. So he planned to divide Bengal in two parts in 1903 and it was implemented in 1905.

**Socio-economic Reasons :** There were also other reasons behind the Partition of Bengal - one of which was economic and the other one was social. During that time Kolkata became the nerve centre for socio-economic activities. Mills and factories, trade and commerce, courts-offices, education institutions- everything was confined within Kolkata. But there was no appropriate transportation system for the raw materials to transport. As a result, the economic condition of Bengal hampered gradually. The population of this area remained uneducated and deprived of education or higher education because of the lacking of appropriate education institutes. Considering these the division of Bengal was inevitable.

**Political Reasons :** Lord Curzon did not divide Bengal only considering the advantages of administration or the welfare of the people of the East Bengal. It also involved a far reaching political interest of the British government. The middle class Bengali intellectuals were gradually growing conscious of nationalism and politics. The issue could not escape the consideration of Lord Curzon. The Congress leaders led the all India movement from Kolkata. Therefore its main objective was to stop all anti-British movements that centered upon Kolkata. The united strength of the Hindu-Muslim solidarity, and the united Bengal were threats for the British rulers. Therefore he wanted to kill two birds with one stone. As the strength of the Bangalees was made weak, the Muslim community was also made happy for the development of the East Bengal. Thus Curzon divided Bengal more to sustain the British rule than to do welfare for the East Bengal according to his "divide and rule" policy. In this way, arrangements were made to weaken the Indian National Unity.

**The Reactions to the Partition :** There was a mixed reaction among the people against the partition. The Muslims in the East Bengal led by Nowab Salimulla welcomed the partition. Even the Muslim newspapers also expressed their satisfaction in the partition of Bengal. The majority of the population in the new province was Muslims. Therefore they gave an absolute support to the partition with the view that the undeveloped Muslim community of the East Bengal would get advantage in education as well as administrative and economic sectors.

On the other hand there was an extreme reaction among the Hindus against the Partition of the Bengal. Led by the Indian National Congress they raised strong united movement against the partition of Bengal. Some historians suggest that the elevated class of the Hindu community i.e. the capitalists, lawyers, owners of the newspapers, politicians opposed the partition because the move would hamper their interest. However the anti-partition movement became irresistible no matter whether they were guided by their personal interests or by the ideals of national unity. Leaders like Surendranath Banerjee, Bipin Chandra Paal, Orbinda Ghosh, Ashwini Kumar Datta, Balgongadhor Tilak and even the liberal leaders like Gokhle also took part in the movement. Suendranath Banerjee defined the partition as a national calamity. The anti-partition movement gradually assumed the character of nativist or swadeshi movements. Armed activities were also involved in this movement because of some extremist leaders. Failing to dispel the movement the government at last withdrew the declaration of the Partition of Bengal in 1911. King George the 5th declared the abolition of the Partition of Bengal in Delhi in 1911 when he was in a visit in India.

The abolition of the partition made the Hindus happy while the Congress considered it a victory of their policy. But the Muslim community was much disappointed. They lost their confidence upon the British government and the Congress. They started to believe firmly that the Congress was not concerned with the welfare of the Muslims. The Muslim leaders of the Bengal marked the act as a worst example of treachery.

The relation between the Hindus and Muslims got a crack after this incident. Communal riots also started after this event. The political aims of Hindus and Muslims became different after the foundation of Muslim League in 1906 AD. The Muslims gradually began to feel an extreme urge for an individual national-identity.

**Individual Work:** Mark the political objectives of the British government behind the Partition of Bengal .

### **Swadeshi Movement**

The movement developed by the extremists among the Congress leadership after the failure of the lawful movement is called the Swadeshi Movement. This movement focused on two types of activities - boycotting and being nativist (swadeshi).

The boycott movement aimed at giving up the English goods. Gradually the word boycott assumed a broader use. The activity not only boycotted the English goods but also included a program like refusing English education system. Thus the Swadeshi movement assumed the spirit of a national education movement. Many students were



expelled from schools and colleges for taking part in the movement which raised the necessity of establishing national education institutions. For the national education movement there grew a number of national schools and a few vocational institutions in different parts in the country.

The Swadeshi movement soon spread at different parts of Bangla. Various actions were taken to boycott English goods like boycotting English education. Oaths were taken through meetings and seminars at different parts in the country to boycott English goods and education. Congress leaders openly encouraged people in the remote areas to burn English goods and to use native products. So the demand for English goods decreased. During this time native cotton, soap, salt, sugar and leather industries developed at different places of the country.

Different classes of people became involved in the swadeshi movement. Various organizations were formed to increase the popularity of the movement among which Anushilon in Dhaka, Jugantar Smity in Kolkata, Swadeshi Bandhob in Barishal, Brati in Faridpur, Shadhona in Mymensingh were remarkable. Writers wrote various articles in magazines to excite patriotic spirits among people. In this regard Rabindranath Tagore, Dijendralal Roy and Rajanikanta Sen played a pioneer role. Bard Mukunda Chandra Dev in Barisal succeeded in exciting the patriotic feelings among the villagers singing songs in the villages. Different magazines also contributed a lot in the anti Separation, and Swadeshi movements. Newspapers like The Bengali, The Sanjiboni, The Jugantor, The Amritbazar, The Sayandha, The Hitobadhi and many other news papers published various articles highlighting the spirits of the Bengali nationalism. The women folk also began to take part in the political activities through their participation in the Swadeshi movement.

Though the swadeshi movement was conflicting to the Muslim interest in the East Bengal, a few leaders from the majority Muslim community initially supported it. However, they ultimately withdraw their support. The Swadeshi movement was also influenced by the Hindu rituals and customs for which the Muslim community kept a distance from this movement. The Hindu feudal lords or Zamindar class supported the movement strongly because the majority of the peasants in the Bengal were Muslims. They were highly exploited for a faulty land management system. They were also tortured by the Zamindar class and their aids. That is why the peasants were aggrieved with the Zamindars who were mostly Hindu. Even some of the Hindu peasants also supported the separation of Bengal being fed up with the repressions.

**Group Work:** Make a list of the newspapers and journals which opposed the separation of the Bengal. Mention the areas where the revolutionary groups developed in the context of the Swadeshi movement.

Swadeshi movement failed to assume a national character because of the distance maintained by the Muslims. The boycott of English products also could not achieve success from this movement. Hence the Marwari business community and the rural business community were not involved in this movement. Above all common people also kept distance when the movement gradually advanced towards a secret armed revolution. Therefore the movement without mass participation failed to be successful.

The movement also failed to mature because of the distance of the Muslim community from it. Common people, even the poor class peasants also did not try to understand the spirit of this movement. So neither the movement could take a national shape nor could it be a movement for all. Moreover there were extreme tortures of the British government and the police on the supporters and activists of the Swadeshi movement. All these caused the ultimate failure of the movement.

Though the Swadeshi movement could not achieve any instant success it could create a long term impact. This movement pioneered the anti British movement and hence the independence movement. As a result of the students' involvement in this movement, as the importance of the students became significant; they also grew politically conscious. It also opened avenues for students to be involved in other movements in India later on. Another significant aspect of this movement is economic. It increased the enthusiasm for establishing native industries, mills and factories. The native rich people began to establish mills and factories. For example, various mills and factories were founded in different parts of the country for the production of native cotton, soap, salt, sugar, paper and leather goods. Modern industries like The Bengal Chemical Company were established during this time. The famous Tata Company was also founded Tata factory in 1910 AD. Many other small industries were also founded during this time. Laterally there was significant increase of nourishing local values in the fields of science, education, language and literature, culture etc. The patriotic and nationalistic songs of Rabindranath Tagore, Dijendralal Roy, Rajanikant, Mukunda Das were composed during that period. Rabindranath composed his famous song amar sonar bangla ami tomai valobashi (O my golden Bengal I love you) this time.

The frustrating aspect of the Swadeshi movement is that there developed bitterness in the harmonious relation between the Hindus and Muslims. This bitterness gradually increased through various events and accidents. The bitterness which generated during the anti-separation movements became bitterer in the Swadeshi movement. It left an all out negative influence upon political, social and national activities which ended with the dividing of India in two countries.

**Individual Work:** Make a list of the mills and factories which were established as a result of the Swadeshi movement.

### **Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements**

**Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements:** In the political history of India the combined struggles of Hindus and Muslims in Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements are quite significant. These are the first wide and nation-wide mass movement. This combined movement of Hindus and Muslims shook the foundation of the British empire. The Indian Muslim community started this movement in order to uphold the dignity of the Turkish Caliph and the integrity of Turkey. On the other hand, the aim of the non-cooperation movement was to achieve self-governance in India.

**Reasons behind the Khilafat Movement:** The Muslims of India respected the Caliph of Turkey as the Caliph or religious leader of the Muslim world. But the

Indian Muslims were embarrassed when the Sultan of Turkey had supported the anti British power Germany. Historically they were loyal to the Caliph for religious obedience and to the British government on political grounds. The Muslims extended their support for the British government as their own government in the First World War. But they also asserted the condition that the British government would do no harm against the Caliph of Turkey. When Germany was defeated in the war misfortune also fell upon Turkey. As a punishment for supporting Germany in the war it was planned that Turkey would be divided in various parts, according to the Savers treaty. The Indian Muslims were distressed with this decision and raised a great movement in order to uphold the dignity of the Turkish Caliph and the integrity of Turkey. This is known as the Khilafat movement in the history of India. The two brothers Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Shawkat Ali along with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad led this movement.

**Non-cooperation Movement:** There were several reasons behind the movement of Congress against the British government. Mahatma Gandhi called for a non-cooperation movement in 1920 AD. The Reformation Act of 1919 failed to meet up the expectations of the Indians. In addition, the extreme repressive measures of the British Government gave birth to a new mode of anti-British movements. In 1990 The government passed the Rao lat act. This act empowered the police to arrest anyone without any warrant and sentence anyone in the court. The act aggrieved all classes of people in India. A Hartal was observed on April 6, 1919 as a protest against this deterrent act called by Mahatma Gandhi, who was a new face in politics and a believer of non-violent movement. Gandhi joined Indian politics in 1917 AD. Like many other places this movements also spread in the Panjab. In Amritsar of the Panjab many unarmed people were killed on April 13 on General Dier's order. This brutal killing has been termed as Jalianwalabag Massacre. Congress formed an investigation committee with a number of distinguished leaders. Rabindranath boycotted his Knight title in a protest against the massacre. Censorship upon the newspapers also went in rampart along with the policy of repression. This situation was further fuelled by the price hike owing to the economic recession caused by World War II. In this circumstance, Gandhiji was successful to unite the Hindu and Muslim leaders and called for a total movement in 1923 AD. The leaders of the Khilafat and the Non-cooperation Movements harnessed an all out movement through their united programmes. This movement assumed the spirit of all India mass movement until 1921-22.

**The Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements in Bengal:** A meeting was held in Dhaka on December 18, 1919 in order to form the Khilafat committee. The meeting demanded the release of Moulana Mohammad Ali and Moulana Shawkat Ali. It was also decided that a six member delegation would be sent to Amritsar in order to participate in the all India Khilafat committee. The Khilafat Ishtehar (or declaration of the Khilafat committee) was published in 1920 along with a call for the non-cooperation movement. The leaders of the Khilafat movement Moulana Shawkat Ali and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad came to Dhaka in the month of March in 1920. The people of Dhaka welcomed them chanting the slogans like "Allahu Akbar" and "Bonde Mataram". The Muslims also observed Roza (fasting) and the Hindus also kept "uposh" (fasting) on March 1919, the day scheduled for observing Hartal. A public meeting was also held in Dhaka on this day. The meeting declared that it was impossible for the Muslims to remain loyal to the British

government unless the Khilafat was safe. A meeting was held on April 13 in 2020 to remember the Jaliwanwalabag massacre. Other programs taken in the light of the Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements were also observed simultaneously. The meeting also protested against the Raolat Act. The program declared that the election of the Bengal Legislative Council under the law of 1919 would be boycotted along with the boycott of the schools and colleges. People denied Chowkidary tax in different parts in Bangladesh like Mymensingh, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Noakhali districts. The people of Bangladesh continued to play a vital role in the Khilafat and non-cooperation movements roughly about a year despite various repressions and tortures from the government and police sides.

### **Significance of Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements:**

The Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements are significant for various reasons. The Muslims in India for the first time participated in the anti British movements, similarly both the Hindus and the Muslims for the first time made a united movement. Due to this joint movement the British policy of "divide and rule" failed to function for a while. It paved the way of a political and communal solidarity between the Hindus and the Muslims. In contrast, this solidarity frightened the British government. This movement succeeded in spreading the political spirit not only among the young Muslims but also among the whole Indian community. But both the movement and the unity were temporary. Distance between two communities began to increase as soon as the movement ended.

### **The Armed Movement in Bengal (1911AD- 1930):**

The failure in the boycott and Swadeshi movements led the young people of the Bengal to the ways of armed revolution. The secret armed activities taken with a view to liberating the country were known as The Armed Movement in Bengal. This movement gradually became frequent by the activities like sudden bomb attacks, killings of high government officers, small battles in the guerrilla style etc.

Though the movement sustained from 1911 to 1930, it had started much earlier. The armed revolutionary activities exposed through the bomb attack of Khudiram in 1908 to kill English Magistrate Kingsford. The movement originally ended in 1930. But there were such attacks even after the time.

The first phase of the Armed Movement in Bengal weakened even before the Separation Act was nullified in 1911. The top leaders of the first phase of this movement were Arbinda Ghosh, Rabindra Ghosh, Bhupendra Nath Datta and so on. Pulin Bihari Das was the leading organizer of the Onushilon Samity in Dhaka. They were involved in various revolutionary activities including making bombs to collecting arms of various types. They made the government restless with armed attacks and secret killings. An effort was also taken to kill Lieutenant Governor Fuller. Prafulla Chaki, an associate of Khudiram to kill English Magistrate Kingsford, committed suicide. Khudiram was hanged after he was being arrested. This time a number of revolutionaries were hanged at different charges including the bomb attack in Maniktola and other places. A number of revolutionaries were also given banishment in the distant islands and many were imprisoned. For such an extreme policy of repression the first phase of the armed revolution became timid. The second phase of the revolutionary movement started in 1912. Though the movement was

Kolkata based, it broke out at different parts in the East Bengal as well. This time the revolutionaries resumed killing, bomb attack robbery etc. With this objective an explosive factory was founded in Kolkata. In the mean time, a number of robbery took place in Kolkata, and in different parts in the East Bengal such as Jessore, Khulna etc. By the end of the 1912 Lord Harding was bomb attacked in Delhi under the plan of Rasbihari Basu. Harding escaped the attack but the English government declared an award of taka one lakh to capture Rasbihari Basu.

Many revolutionaries of Bengal dared to collect arms from the foreign countries in the context of the First World War. Their objective was to achieve independence through a battle against the English power. They included Bagha Jatin (Jatindranath Roy), Dr Jadu Gopal Mukhopadhyay, Norendranath Bhattacharya and some others. They were promised by Germany, the enemy of England, to get arms. The government arranged to arrest all including Bagha Jatin when the secret was exposed to the government. A revolutionary, Chittoprio was killed in a battle against police when the revolutionaries confronted them. Bagha Jatin was arrested along with three other revolutionaries. He died during the trial. Two of his comrades were hanged and another one received the sentence of life long imprisonment.

Death sentences, lifelong imprisonment, brutal torture—nothing could remove the revolutionaries from their objectives. The plan to kill all natives and English higher officers sustained. Confrontations with the police, sudden attacks, bombing continued.

The Deputy Police Super Bashanta Chattopadhyay was killed on January 30, 1916 in Vabanipur. When the number of such confrontations increased the government arrested many revolutionaries in the Defense act in 1916-17. As soon as Mahatma Gandhi withdrew the non-cooperation program in 1922, arrests and police torture increased considerably. The activities of the revolutionaries increased equally too. The revolutionaries published a pamphlet with the title Lalpatra (The Red paper) calling to kill the tyrant police members. In 1924 a revolutionary Gopinath Saha killed an English man in lieu of killing the police Commissioner of Kolkata. Gopinath was hanged for this murder. While visiting the prison the Jail Super of the Aligonj zone was killed by a revolutionary Promod Chowdhury who attacked him with a rod. The English government introduced the Bengal Ordinance in 1924. The revolutionary activities became weak when a huge number of revolutionaries were arrested under this Ordinance.

Mahtma Gandhi started his law violating movement in 1930. The revolutionary activities in Bengal increased much with this movement. It is notable that the revolutionary activity was the strongest in Bengal and the Bengali revolutionaries kept the English administration restless. The young Bengalis always leaped into the armed revolution without caring for their lives.



Picture: Surja Sen



Picture: Pritilota Sen

Such a brave revolutionary was Master Da who was originally Surja (also Surya) Sen (1894-1934) by name. He came across the revolutionaries when he was a student in a college. After graduation he joined Umatara Higher English School as a teacher. In the mean time he was popularly known as Masterda. This time he formed a revolutionary organization with the help of Ambika Chakrabarti, Anurup Sen, Nogen Sen and others. He himself and his organization were repeatedly arrested as a result of their involvement in the revolutionary activities but they were released every time for the lack of any proof. Master Da formed The Chittagong Revolutionary Force to free Chittagong from the English rule. This troop was later termed Chittagong Revolutionary Army. This troop captured government offices in Chittagong one after another. Last of all they robbed the Chittagong Arms Depot. "Independent Chittagong Government" and a war against the British government was also declared. This was a war between two unequal forces. The English government engaged a huge force against Surja Sen and his allies. The last war took place in the Jalalabad Hills. A number of young people were killed in this and other battles. The revolutionaries took shelter in the houses of the peasants. Surja Sen was arrested in 1933 and he was sentenced to death after a summary trial. After some brutal tortures he was hanged on January 12 in 1934 and his dead body was drowned in the sea.

Surja Sen's revolutionary army also had women soldiers. Among them the most remarkable ones were Kalpana Dutta and Pritilota Waddeddar. An uncommonly brilliant student Pritilota stood first in the Intermediate examination in 1900 and passed BA examination with distinctions. In the mean time she involved herself in the revolutionary activities and came across the organization of Surya Sen. An uncommonly brave woman Pritilota was assigned to lead the attack on "Pahartoli European Club" because of her efficiency. After a successful operation there she helped her companions to escape the place safely but committed suicide before being captured. Pritilota has been a icon in the history of all revolutionary movements in Bengal.

Like the revolutionaries of Chittagong the Jugantor Samity in Kolkata was also sufficiently active. The efforts to kill Charles Tegart in the Dalhousi Square in Kolkata foiled in 1930. In the same year Inspector General of Prisons Simpson was killed in the Writer's Building in Kolkata. Before that tyrant police officer Loma was killed by Binoy Basu. Binoy and Badal, two accomplices in this operation committed suicide and Dinesh was hanged. The effort to kill the Governor of Bengal Jackson was failed. An accomplice in this operation Bina Das was given a lifelong imprisonment. Three consecutive English Magistrates were killed in Mednipur by the revolutionaries.

Though the revolutionary activities subsided by 1930, the revolutionaries in Chittagong continued their operations one after another. The revolutionaries succeeded to make people aware of their existence by an operation on the Cricket Ground in Chittagong on January 07, 1934. Two revolutionaries were killed on that day and two more were killed after being captured.

### **Reasons Behind the failure of the Armed Movement:**

One of the reasons behind the failure of the armed revolution was its disintegration with the common people. This movement was led by the hidden organizations. Some educated

conscious young people were related to them. All revolutionary activities were run secretly. Common people had no idea about their activities. For the common people armed attack, bombing, killing all these meant terrorism and violence. For this they stayed far from them.

The majority population of Bengal remained at a distance from this movement. Since there were some Hindu rituals like taking oath by touching the Geeta, reciting verses in front of the goddess Kali were mandatory for revolutionaries, the Muslims felt obstacles to take part in the revolution.

The revolutionary groups had to work in small units for the sake of security and confidentiality. No groups could learn the activities of others. So there grew a distance among the groups. For this often it became difficult to maintain communication with other groups to make an operation successful. There existed weakness in organizing activities due to lack of proper coordination. Besides, the secret organizations worked in their own way. One group did not have any coordination with the other. So the armed revolution continued throughout the country separately under no particular leadership. This separation among the revolutionaries caused the failure of the revolution.

Moreover, the firmness of the government in tackling the movement and the disintegration of the revolutionaries with the common people made them helpless and cornered. Not only that, as division and enmity among the group leaders made the armed revolution weak, it also gave birth to extreme disliking for each other. In this context a number of revolutionaries joined Communist Party when it was formed in India.

Though the revolutionary movement could not achieve success, the self-sacrifice of the revolutionaries, their patriotism, courage captivated Bangalees or even the Indians more for freedom. Though the movement was not a complete success, the ideals of the revolutionaries lit the ways of the farther movements.

- Individual Work**
1. Make a list of the leaders related to armed revolutionary movement.
  2. Why did Pritilota lead the armed operation? What was her last condition?

### **Swaraj and Bengal Pact**

Many Congress leaders were released from the jail after Gandhi had withdrawn his non-cooperation program. This time he faced a distant in opinion with the released leaders Chittaranjan Das (C.R. Das) and Motilal Nehru regarding the future activities of Congress. C.R. Das and his followers decided to join the councils formed by election. They took that decision because after the failure of the non-cooperation movement there was no situation to go for law violating movement. Furthermore they had an objective to foil the Reform Act of 1911 after joining the legislative council. But their efforts went in vain in the Goa conference of Congress. In this context Swaraj Party was formed in 1922 by C.R. Das with the support of a section of the Congress leadership. C.R. Das became the President of the party while Motilal Nehru became one of the Secretaries.

Those who supported Swaraj Party to achieve self-governance were called pro-changers and those opposed the Swaraj Party were known as no-changers. These two groups had no other difference in their objectives other than determining the means to achieve independence.



The opponents of Swaraj Party were rigid in continuing the non-cooperation movement towards forming a law violating movement. On the other hand, many revolutionaries like Subhash Chandra Basu, Hossein Shahid Suharawardi and other young leaders joined the Swaraj Party.

### **The Programs of Swaraj Party:**

1. To oppose government activities in the legislative council sessions and make the Reformation Act of 1919 null and void;
2. To refuse government budget and make the cabinet fall;
3. To strengthen nationalist spirit and activities through the introduction of various proposals and bills; and
4. To make the foreign rule impossible.

### **The activities of Swaraj Party**

An election was held in 1923 for the second time according to the India Rule Act or the Montague Chamesford Act of 1923. Swaraj Party participated in the election and achieved success beyond their expectations. Particularly in Bangla and in Madhyapadesh this party bagged the majority of seats in the central legislative council. The foundation of Swaraj Party became strong for the support of the Muslims and it became possible to make obstacles against various steps taken by the government. The credit of success in Bengal went to the party chief C.R. Das. His non-communal spirit, liberal policy succeeded to achieve the confidence of the Muslim community. Their support strengthened him and his party.

### **Bengal Pact or Bengal Treaty (December, 1923)**

Swaraj Party leader Chittaranjan Das successfully realized the Hindu-Muslim crisis deeply. For this foresighted leader made a treaty which is known historically as the Bengal Pact or Bengal Treaty. So far the Bengal Pact was the most significant incident in the history of Bengal. Undoubtedly his efforts paved the ways for the unity of Hindus and Muslims in India.

The most famous leaders who played a significant role to formulate the famous pact popularly known as C.R. Das formula were Abdul Karim, Mujibur Rahman, Akram Khan, and Moniruzzaman Islamabadi. Sir Abdur Rahim, A.K.Fazlul Haq, Hossen Shahid Suharawardi also helped formulate the treaty and signed in it. Bengal Congress leader Subhash Chandra Bose also signed in the pact. The Bengal pact was approved by their combined efforts.

The treaty signed on December 16, 1923 focused on providing various advantages for the Muslim community. They were -

1. All religious groups would enjoy their rights once autonomy would have enacted. In a separate electoral process Bengal Legislative council will elect their representatives according to the ratio of population.
2. 60% representations will come from the majority group and 40% will representations will come from the minority groups in all local autonomous institutions in each districts.

3. 55% of appointments in government offices would be preserved for the Muslims.
4. If any law related to any religion would be enacted, three fourth majority of the representatives of that religion should support that to pass the bill.
5. No slogan or rallies with music could pass any mosque and there would be no intervention in slaughtering of cows.

**Individual Work:** Arrange the non-communal spirits reflected in the Bengal Pact choronologically.

### **The End of Bengal Pact**

The Bengal Pact or the Bengal Treaty was a document in favour of religious harmony between the Hindus and Muslims. Swaraj Party was successful to bag the majority in the election for the confidence of the Muslims upon them due to the content of this document. Not only that when Hossein Shahid Suharawardi was elected the Deputy Mayor of Kolkata, the Muslims got employment in the Corporation. Thus the Bengal Pact or the Bengal Treaty which was initiated by C. R. Das to solve the problem of Hindu-Muslim crisis was equally pragmatic and praiseworthy. But unfortunately, the Hindu newspapers, conservative Hindu community, Gandhi supporters in Congress and other opponent parties opposed the Bengal Pact strongly. On the other hand, movements like "Sudhdhi" and "Sangothon" backed by the Hindu Mohasova and "Tableague" and "Tamjid" movements of the Muslims were responsible for the destruction of communal harmony. Additionally all means of the Hindu-Muslim unity came to an end for ever with the untimely death of Chittaranjan Das on June 16, 1925. The Congress leaders and others kept silent about the Bengal Pact afterwards. All means to implement this treaty shut down after the communal riots in Kolkata and then in Dhaka the next year (i.e. 1926).

**Individual Work:** Whose death did shut the doors of Hindu-Muslim unity? Make a list of his contributions for this unity.

### **The Background of Lahore Resolution**

The prospect of Hindu-Muslim unity extinguished following the failure of the Bengal Pact. The efforts suggested by Nehru to make negotiations between the Hindus and the Muslims also failed in 1928 on the issue of election for the minorities. Failing in his efforts to establish a Hindu-Muslim harmony Jinnah presented his famous 14 point formula in 1929, where Muslim interests had special priority. All these intensified communalism and distance between the two communities. Under these circumstances all political parties refused the Symon Commission report in 1930. Three consecutive round-table conferences in London between 1930 to 1932 ended without any decision as no consensus was reached in those meetings regarding the reservation of seats for the minority communities. This time leaders of different communities created pressure on the British Prime Minister to solve this crisis. In this context, the British Prime Minister Ramsey Macdonald declared the "Communal Award" to solve the crisis. In that charter there was a provision to hold separate elections keeping a number of seats reserved. The

"Communal Award" created a sharp reaction among different communities and parties. Though the Muslims too were critical about the award, they decided to go with the idea. Afterwards the British parliament accepted the India Rule Act in 1935 which included federal system of government and provincial autonomy. Though the Act was an important document in the administrative history of India, the federal government system could not be enacted according to it. Jinnah made a harsh criticism of the proposed federal system. Congress President Rajendraprasad also criticizing it bitterly commented that there was no sign of natural development towards autonomy of the provinces. Both the parties demanded extended legislative and political reforms. On the other hand, Hindu Mahasabha opposed the Act. Despite the adverse reactions of the political parties the proposed provincial autonomy became effective under this act in 1937. In the provincial elections Congress bagged the majority of seats in most of the provinces. In this circumstance, Congress formed provincial governments in the Muslim majority provinces without any dialogue with Muslim League. Later Congress President Jawaharlal Nehru in his post electoral comments told that in India the existence of two powers were obvious - one was Congress and the other was the government. Such remark caused a harsh and adverse reaction among the Muslim leaders. Mr. Jinnah who had a long effort to ensure the communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims adopted a new way in politics due to the statement of the Congress president. In 1938 in a meeting of the provincial Muslim League in Sindh he termed the Muslims and the Hindus two different nations. Thus before the Lahore resolution was presented, the view that the Muslims and the Hindus were two different nations created the idea of creating two separate states for them. The practical example of this view was the Lahore Resolution.

### **Lahore Resolution**

Allama Iqbal, who was a poet, mentioned the prospect of a different state for the Muslims much earlier than the presentation of the Lahore Resolution. Chowdhury Rahmat Ali, a student of the Cambridge University, drew the picture of an independent state called Pakistan to be created comprising the Muslim majority states in the north-western India. Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not speak of a separate state for the Muslims till 1937-38. But the bitter experiences in the election of 1937 and also for the remarks of the winner Congress President he realized that the interest and hopes of the Muslim community would never reach its goal under the Hindu leadership. Considering over all political situation, the bitter experiences of the past and the interest of the Muslims, Jinnah stated his well discussed and criticised Two Nations Theory in 1939. The Lahore Proposal in 1940 only gave direction to achieve the practical form of his theory.

Since this proposal was accepted in the Lahore Council of Muslim League in 1940 it was known as the Lahore Resolution in the history, which is an extremely significant issue in the political history of the sub-continent Muslims. Mohammad Ali Jinnah chaired this session. It was A. K. Fazlul Haque who presented his proposal in the session on March 23. Lahore resolution stated that no constitutional plan could function unless that was based upon the basic principles of the Lahore Resolution.



Picture : Sere-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haque

### **The Principal Clauses of the Lahore Resolution**

- a. Independent states to be formed with the Muslim majority regions in the North-Western and Eastern India.
- b. These independent states will be autonomous and sovereign.
- c. Sufficient measures must be taken in the constitution to ensure the rights and interests of the minority groups after discussing with them.
- d. Powers on defense, foreign affairs, communication would be bestowed upon the concerned subsidiary states.

In the Lahore Proposal it was suggested to form states with the Muslim majority regions. For this the Bengali Muslims dreamt of an "independent Bangla state". But on April 9, 1946 in Delhi Mr. Jinnah presented a different proposal in a convention of the Muslim League Legislative Council Members. There he made some amendments to the "Lahore Proposal". In this proposal suggestion came for forming a single state with the Muslim majority provinces. Therefore it can be said that Pakistan was born not on the basis of the Lahore Proposal of 1940, rather it was born on the basis of the Delhi proposal in 1946.

### **The importance of Lahore Proposal**

There was a sharp reaction among the Congress leaders on Lahore Resolution. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru condemned the proposal bitterly and commented that an individual Muslim state was an impossible matter. But historically it is true that the Muslims began to dream for an independent home land after the Lahore Proposal. A new stream in Indian political-constitutional began to flow because of this proposal. Mohammad Ali Jinnah began to identify the Muslims as a different nation. For that the establishment of a new state for Muslims became a matter of time only. From this time the politics of Jinnah and Muslim League ran towards the establishment of an independent state, which had its ultimate result in the division of the country in August in 1947. As a practical consequence of the two nations theory two countries called Pakistan and India were born respectively on August 14 on August 15.

### **Pre-division Politics of East Bengal (1937-1947)**

The death of Chittaranjan Das in 1925 and the Kolkata riot in 1926 created an adverse situation for the Hindu-Muslim relation. In this circumstance Muslim leaders like Maolana Akram Khan and Tamij Uddin Khan left Congress.

A decision was taken to form a party named Nikhil Bongo Proja Samity (All Benagal Peasants Association) in 1929 after the provincial legislative election. The principal objective of this party was to improve the condition of the poor peasants of Bengal. As a result, there grew a new stream in peasants' movement and politics. In 1935 A.K.Fazlul Hoque was elected the President of Nikhil Bongo Proja Samity (Peasants Association) in the council in Mymensingh.

The party had a new name "Krishok Proja Party" in the next year. Krishok Proja Party was absolutely an individual and provincial political party. There was a very close

competition between Krishok Proja Party and Muslim league in the general election in March 1937. But both of the parties failed to bag required number of seats to form a government. As a result, Muslim League accepted the proposal of forming the government with A. K. Fazlul Hoque as the Chief Minister. Fazlul Hoque was elected the Chief Minister and took the charge of education ministry. This coalition government was weak. Thus Krishok Proja Party also became weak.

Fazlul Hoque resigned from Muslim League in 1941 following disagreements with Jinnah. Since Fazlul Hoque had the support of the majority, he formed his second cabinet in December in the same year. This new cabinet was an assembly of various political parties. Fazlul Hoque initiated a new political trend in Bangla by forming such a cabinet. This new trend aimed to solve the crisis through establishing a communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims in Bangla. Fazlul Hoque's new cabinet was in power from 1941 to 1943. He was compelled to resign because of his failure to solve the crisis created by a great famine in 1943.

Khawja Najimuddin formed his cabinet on April 13, 1943 in the context of the state wide famine. It is thought that more than three millions of people died in this devastating famine. Nazimuddin cabinet fell down in 1945.

Bengal Muslim League was divided in two factions in 1946 on the issues like the provincial election and the leadership of the party. At last Suharawardi became the leader of Bengal Muslim League. Muslim League bagged 114 seats in the election which in other means reflected the desire of Bengali Muslims very clearly.

In the political history of Bengal this election and its result was very much significant. Sowharawardi formed a government on April 24, 1946. In the true sense the tenure of Sowharawardi cabinet marked the transition in the history of Bengal and India. The end of the British rule, riot in Kolkata in the context of dividing India, the attempts to form a united Bengal, and the division of India were the significant events of this time.

### **Attempts to Form a United Bengal**

The Hindu-Muslim relation turned to a severe riot in 1947. The British government completely failed to manage the crisis in such an extreme situation and expressed desire to transfer power to the Indians. In this situation the Chief Minister of Bengal Hossein Shahid Suharawardi presented the proposal to form a Joint Bengal state. Sharat Chandra Basu took a strong stance in favour of the proposal. The proposal was known as the Basu-Suharawardi Treaty in the history of this subcontinent.

In a press conference in Delhi on April 27 Hossein Shahid Suharawardi announced the issue of forming an independent, and sovereign undivided Bengal state in his speech and also expressed strong arguments in favour of this proposal. Muslim League leader Abul Hashim formulated a framework for this greater Bengal state too. Later in a speech Sharat Chandra Basu called upon to make Bangla a Socialist Republic.



Picture :Hossein Shahid Suharawardi

### **Basu-Suharawrady Treaty**

A meeting was held in the house of Congress leader Sharat Basu on May 20, 1947 in favour of a united Bengal. A treaty was signed to form an independent sovereign united Bengal in that meeting. For the greater Bangla state the treaty was signed by Abul Hasim on behalf of Muslim League and Sharat Chandra Basu on behalf of Congress. Muslim League Leaders like Hossain Shahid Suharawardy, Abul Hashim, Fazlur Rahman, Mohammad Ali, A.M. Malik were present in that meeting. On the other hand, Sharat Chandra Basu, Kiron Shankar Roy and Satya Ranjan Bakhshi were present among the Hindu leaders. Here is the summary of the treaty.

1. Bangla would be an independent and sovereign state. The state itself will decide the type of its relation with the other parts of India.
2. The seats of the legislative council will be decided on the ratio of the number of Hindu and Muslim population and the council will be elected by the votes of the adult people.
3. Once the proposal for independent Bangla had been accepted the present cabinet would be dissolved. An interim cabinet would be formed. The posts in that cabinet will be equally distributed between Hindu and Muslim communities except the position of the Prime Minister.
4. Hindus and Muslims would be equal in number in all services including the Military and Police departments. Such jobs would be restricted only for the Bangalees (also Bengalese).
5. There would a representatives' council consisting of 30 members to formulate the constitution. Among them 16 members would be Muslim and 14 would be Hindus.

### **The failure of the proposal of a United Bengal**

There was an adverse reaction among the Congress and the Muslim League leaders. Initially the fundamentalist conservative Muslim league leaders were in favour of the treaty. At the primary level even Mahatma Gandhi and Mohammad Ali Jinnah also kept silence in support of this proposal. But the issue became complex for the opposition of the top ranking Congress and Muslim league leaders. As a result both Mahatma Gandhi and Mohammad Ali Jinnah changed their attitude. Though the Muslim League leaders were initially its supporters, later they, in particular Khawja Nazimuddin and Akram Khan, started demanding to make united Bangla a part of Pakistan. Akram Khan after attending a meeting with Mohammad Ali Jinnah on May 16 in Delhi said that the Muslim League did not support the idea of the united independent Bengal. Thus the Basu-Suharawrady Treaty lost the support of the Muslim League.

The united independent Bangla idea or the Basu-Suharawrady Treaty faced equal strong opposition from the Congress hierarchy from the very beginning. Many Congress leaders including Jawherlal Nehru and Sardar Ballovbhai Patel opposed the plan. They were not prepared to lose Kolkata in the independent India. They also didn't want to lose Assam which was rich in Petrol and other mineral resources. Furthermore Congress was concerned for the security of the Hindu community in the Muslim majority state of the united Bengal. Samaprasad Roy of Hindu Mohasava was in extreme opposition against the united Bengal. Thus the idea of united Bangla lost the support of Congress. Again, some newspapers and magazines made continuous

propaganda against the united Bangla. The West Bengal based Bengali and non Bengali business community, traders, capitalists took a strong stand against this proposal. Even the Hindu intellectuals in Dhaka were also active against it. In this circumstance the central leadership of Congress refused the independent Bengal plan. On the other side, Lord Mountbatten presented his plan to divide Bengal and the Punjab on June 03 in his declaration of dividing India. As most of the members in the Bengal legislative council voted in favour of the division of the Bengal on June 20, the division became inevitable. The Indian Independence Act, 1947 stated the division of Bengal and the Punjab. Accordingly India was divided on August 14, 1947 when an artificial state Pakistan was born. The next day, on 15th August India got freedom. The East Bengal or the Purba Bangla became a part of Pakistan which later on came to be known as the East Pakistan. The West Bengal was attached to India. In this way the dream for forming a united independent Bengal came to an end.

**Individual Work:** Find out the reasons behind the opposition against the united Bengal by its opponents.

## **The end of the British Rule**

### **The Birth of India and Pakistan**

**Prologue to the end of the British Rule:** When all concerned refused to accept the Cripse Mission proposal in 1942, a serious dissatisfaction developed in whole India. There came deep frustration even in Politics. Outside India the world was facing the destructions of the Second World War. The Indians felt a panic on the prospect of an attack upon India by Japan, a close allies of Germany. Gandhiji marked the presence of British government in India as the reason behind the supposed cause of the Japanese attack. Therefore in the Allahabad conference of Congress he proposed the British government to leave India in the view that it might change Japan's objective to attack India. Congress started Quit India (varat charo) movement. People became involved in this movement. The movement spread throughout India and assumed the nature of a strong anti British attitude. Mahatma Gandhi declared in the historical session of All India Congress conference in Bombay (presently Mumbai), 'I want freedom. Even I want it within this night, if possible before the dawn' on August 08 in 1942. He also said, "We will achieve independence by struggles. And this will be our last struggle".

But the English government was not prepared then to hand over power to the Indians. Rather the government resolved to stop the movement in an iron hand. Many top ranking Congress leaders like Gandhi, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Jawherlal Nehru were arrested overnight. The government declared Congress an illegal organization and almost all leaders were arrested within a week.

The non-violent movement turned violent. Hartals and general strikes were observed in mills-factories and in schools and colleges to press the demand of the release of the imprisoned leaders. Agitated people became involved themselves in the terrorist activities like picking up railway lines, throwing stones upon the running trains,



setting fire on the government buildings and railway stations etc. A movement without leadership developed in whole India beyond any control of the authority. Somewhere people formed interim governments or even the national governments in their own discretion. A perilous situation took place while Tamluk police station was captured. An old Indian woman named Matongini Hazra got martyrdom because she strongly upheld the flag of India despite being shot by the police. Immediately after this movement human beings became aimless for the fake famine in 1943. Besides an extreme inflation, corruptions, price hike all together caused the destruction of the economic conditions. As a result the anti-British sentiment spread among the frustrated population.

**Individual Work:** Asses the reasons behind Gandhiji's "Quit India" movement.

When there was an extreme frustration in the domestic political circle in India, and all life-risk struggles had failed, an organization named Azad Hind Fouz or Indian National Army (INA) was formed outside the country. Netaji Subhash (or Subhash) Chandra Bose led this Army. Another Bengali revolutionary Rasbihari Basu helped to form this army. An erstwhile President of Congress and the founder of the Forward Block Party Shubhash Chandra Bose opposed the compromising attitude of the Congress politics. He differed from Mahatma Gandhi from the beginning in determining the means to achieve independence. Subhash Bose opposed Gandhi's non violent movement since his adolescent days. Though Gandhi himself had nominated Subhash Chandra Bose to become the President of Congress in 1937, it is Gandhi himself who did not nominate Subhash Bose for the Presidential candidate for the second term. Subhash Bose competed for the post denying the sanction by Gandhi and was re-elected as the President of Congress. The winner in such a challenge against Gandhi later failed to win Gandhi's support in Congress politics. Being frustrated Subhash Bose formed the Forward Block Party. His politics advanced towards an uncompromising destination. The British government arrested him repeatedly from a sense of fear. At last he left the country in the innocence of all in 1941 after being free from jail. It was the time of the Second World War. He first went to Germany, the enemy land of the British government. There he liaised with the German government and tried to form an army. He was the first Indian politician who tried to achieve independence by the help of a foreign power. Since the situation was not in his favour he came to Japan by an adventurous submarine journey crossing the Atlantic and the Indian oceans. There he formed the Azad Hind Fouz with the war prisoner Indian soldiers together with another exiled brave leader Rasbihari Basu. He took the leadership of this force in 1943 and in the same year formed the exiled Azad Hind Government or the exiled Independent Indian Government. This force fought bravely against the English power in different frontiers in India till 1945. Azad Hind Fouz and Subhash Chandra Bose were nightmares to the British government during that period. The armed movement of Subhash Chandra Bose shook the foundation of the British government. Azad Hind Fouz entered India in 1944 from Burma (presently Myanmar) led by this great commander. Azad Hind Fouz captured Kohima-Imphol regions by fighting bravely in those frontiers. Unfortunately when the Japanese had to retreat following their failure to face the extreme attacks from the English force,

part. It means that the proposal for Pakistan was approved by the vote of Bengali Muslims. Hossein Shahid Suharawadi and Bangabondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman contributed most to this victory.

The prospect of a different situation in the politics in this sub continent became prominent in the post election period. The wise Governor Atlee realized that it would not be possible for Britain to rule India for long with honour. Therefore a delegation led by Pathic Lawrence, the Secretary for India, came to India in 1946. This delegation is called the Cabinet Mission. This time the Delhi convention of Muslim League asked the Cabinet Mission to solve the situation by accepting the demand for Pakistan. Discussing with the Muslim League and Congress leaders the Cabinet Mission presented some definite proposals in May on the future Constitution of India.

The proposed plan of the Cabinet mission suggested establishing a federal state with three tiers. For example-

- a. To form an interim central government.
- b. To form an autonomous Indian union with the British Indian native states.
- c. To divide the provinces in three categories such as Hindu majority group, Muslim majority group and the Bengal and Assam group and to form a legislature for each of the groups. But conditions were imposed that if this proposal would be accepted it must be accepted as a whole. Part of it could not be accepted.

Though the demand for Pakistan was ignored in Cabinet Mission plan, Muslim League accepted the proposal. Muslim League realized that the prospect of the establishment of Pakistan existed in the plan. Congress also saw the reflection of creating an undivided India through forming a common central government in this plan. Congress was ready to accept the plan in its own perception of it. But Muslim League refused the plan when Congress had refused it. As a result the proposals of Cabinet Mission to solve the political crisis became null and void.

Governor General Wavell asked the Muslim League and the Congress to join the interim government. Muslim League canceled its previous decision to join the interim government on account of a comment made by the newly elected Congress President Jawherlal Nehru. But Nehru took the initiative to form a government according to the call of Wavell. In its protest Muslim declared August 16 as "the Direct action Day". Thousands of innocent people died on this day in the riot. The British government announced its decision to transfer power to the Indians following the riot and the serious deterioration of the relation between Hindus and Muslims.

British Prime minister Atlee announced in the month of February in 1947 that power would be transferred to the Indians before June, 1948. To discharge the responsibility of transferring power Lord Mountbatten was sent to India as the Governor General in the place of Lord Wavell.

Lord Mountbatten decided to divide India on the basis of his dialogues with the Congress and the Muslim League leaders. In order to protect the country from communal riots the leaders at last agreed to divide India. Mountbatten announced the

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plan of dividing India on June 03 clearly. He also announced that power would be transferred to the Indians sharply before 1948. Muslim League expressed their satisfaction for accepting the demand of Pakistan.

An announcement of the House of Commons in London suggested on July 15, 1947 that two dominions would be established in the names of India and Pakistan. To ascertain the border areas of the two countries a committee was formed under the leadership of Sir Radcliff. Radcliff submitted his report of finalizing the border areas to the Viceroy on August 09 after completing his task. But for some mysterious reasons the report did not see the light of the day. "Indian Independence Act" was formulated on July 18, 1947 which determined the end of the British rule in India. Two new countries named Pakistan and India were born respectively on August 14 and 15, 1947.

**Group Work:** Why were two countries born on the basis of "Indian Independence Act"? Show the reasons.

## Exercise Questions

### Multiple choice questions:

1. Who separated Bangla in 1905?
  - a. Lord Cornewalis
  - b. Lord carzon
  - c. Lord Chamesford
  - d. Lord Reeding
2. Masterda Surja Sen's revolutionary activities included-
  - i. forming a revolutionary Army in Chittagong.
  - ii. declaration of Independent Chittagong government.
  - iii. forming a Chittagong Republican Army.

Which one of the followings is correct?

- a. i and ii
- b. ii and iii
- c. i and iii
- d. i, ii and iii

### Read the text and answer question nos. 3 and 4.

In the Nishapur tea garden the tea-labourers were demonstrating on the street to protest their low wage. When there violence like destructions and blockades went on, the labour leader Kiran asked them to give up violence for a regular movements.

3. Who influenced the labour leaders Kiran?
  - a. Khudiram
  - b. Masterda Surja Sen
  - c. Mahatma Gandhi
  - c. Pulin Bihari Das
4. That leader's activities included
  - i. strengthening Hindu-Muslim harmony
  - ii. protesting the repressive acts.
  - iii. demanding the release of the determined prisoners

Which of the followings is correct?

- a. i and ii
- b. ii and iii
- c. i and iii
- d. i, ii and iii

### **Creative Questions:**

1. Salehpur union is near the river. Crops and roads were damaged widely in the last year's flood. Since it covered a large area, problems arose in the development works including distributing relief goods during the time of the flood. In order to solve this crisis the union was divided into two units.
  - a. Where was emperor Bahadur Shah II exiled?
  - b. What do you mean by the Doctrine of Lapse ?
  - c. What reason behind the separation of Bengal has been reflected in the text?
  - d. Do you think that was the only reason behind the separation act? Give reasons in favour of your opinion.
2. Keya and Kona are two sisters. They went Eid shopping. Though Keya listed some foreign goods in her preference, Kona consents to give up foreign goods for buying own products. At last Kona succeeds to convince her sister Keya and both return home with local products.
  - a. Who abolished the rank of the Emperor of Delhi?
  - b. Why did the Enfield Rifle made soldiers revolt?
  - c. Which of the movements encouraged Kona to buy local products. Explain.
  - d. Do you think that Keya's attitudes are adverse to our economic progress? Give reasons.

## **Chapter Ten**

### **Language Movements and Afterwards Political Episode**

Language Movement was the movement for cultural Right to self determination independence of Bengali's. Subsequently this movement shaped itself as the economic and political confrontation. This agitation placed first pave stone to evolve the Bengali Nationality. The, then, ruler class from the West Pakistan vested themselves to exploit the East Pakistan in suppressive manner from the very first day of Independence from British Monarchy in August 1947. They had tried to impose Urdu' as the state language; which was only spoken by a minor 3.27% people ignoring the vast majority of 56.40% of its total population speaking Bengali. The rulers from West Pakistan declared Urdu as the state language of Pakistan ignoring the opinion of the majority group. The scholars of Bengal erupted in oppose of the decision. They strongly protested this discriminating decision. In this way, the language movement started to get its momentum. The agitation reached its peak in 1952. The whole country (East Pakistan) followed the demonstration. The first time in the world history; Salam, Barkat, Rafique, Jabbar and many other embraced martyrdom for the love of their mother tongue. Language movement had sowed the seed of independence within the dream of Bengali Nation. This motivated the long thriving struggle and revolution to give birth of a new country - our beloved Bangladesh.

**After the end of this chapter we will be able to-**

- explain the importance of Language Movement.
- describe the background of declaring 21st February as the International Mother Language Day and its honor.
- describe the necessity of forming new political organizations
- evaluate the formation United Front Coalition and subsequent proceedings
- honor the language martyrs through honoring the language.
- be interested in sharing political feeling with others and encourage others as well.

#### **The Background of Language Movement:**

Partition of Indian Subcontinent in 1947 resulted the formation of Pakistan and the then East Bengal became a dominion of the newly formed state Pakistan. The two part of Pakistan had no similarity in respect of history, tradition, culture, language. Despite the parts; West Pakistan and East Pakistan (East Bengal) having situated 1000 miles apart, they become one on the basis of only religion. Most of the top level official at administrative, economical and political level had been held by those from West Pakistan. They always had a repressive mentality towards the inhabitants of East Pakistan and they never wanted this part of the country to be in the emerging track. As a result, the ruler class of this newly formed country 'Pakistan' stroke the first bolt on its language as a measure of their intention to exploit eastern dominion. The question of 'what will be the

state language of Pakistan?' risen before the creation of Pakistan in 1947. At that time the influential leaders from Muslim League and Scholars opined favoring Urdu to be the state language of Pakistan. Instantly, the scholars and writers including veteran language specialist of the subcontinent, Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah protested the idea. Just after creation of Pakistan, Tamuddin Majlish, a Bengali Islamic Cultural Organization was formed by Abul Kashem; a professor in Physics Department of University of Dhaka. This was the first organization for language movement. The first publishing by this organization was 'The State Language of Pakistan is Bengali or Urdu' which was published on September 15 1947. The publication stated logics in it favoring Bengali to be the state language. With the initiation of the Tamuddin Majlish, National Language Action Committee which convened by Professor Nurul Haque Bhuiyan of University of Dhaka was formed in October 1947 to frame it as a political movement. Along with these organization many other organizations such as Democratic Youth League, East Bengal Scholar Society, Journalists' Forum started to chorus their voice in various meetings, gatherings and summits to make Bengali as the national language. Paying no attention to these urges; Urdu had been suggested to the Constituent Assembly as the Lingua Franca in the Education Summit held in Karachi in December 1948.

From the very beginning of 1948, the educated society of Bengal became voiced with the demand of Bengali Language. In a meeting of National Language Action Committee, a proposal was made to make Bengali as the medium of education for the primary to secondary level. When in 23 February in 1948 the activities started in English and Urdu for the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan; A member of the assembly and East Bengal Congress Party from Comilla Mr. Dhirendranath Datta opposed it and proposed legislation for allowing Bengali to be spoken by the members and authorize it to be an official language. But, all the members from Muslim League defied the proposal. The students of the east Bengal made a huge protest against it. Strike had been observed in all the education institution in Dhaka on 26 and 29 February. On 2nd March National Language Action Committee was formed for the second time by the student wing in presence of the scholars of east Bengal. Mr. Shamsul Haque selected to be the scholar convener of the committee.

The new committee for the National Language Action called for strike on 11 March. Their demand was to declare Bengali as one of the State Language of Pakistan and official language for East Pakistan Government. During the procession for the demand of Bengali as the national language, many people injured by the police brutality of battenings and lobbing of tear shell. Many of them were arrested including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Shamsul Haque, Oli Ahad, Kazi Golam Mahbub. As a result of this, strike was again observed on 13-15 of March. At this time, not only Dhaka, but also the whole country observed the strike. On the height of the severe civic unrest, the then Chief Minister Khaja Nazimuddin signed a contract with the student leader. In this contract various issues including releasing the arrestees, forming an investigation committee, Bengali as the medium of education, Bengali to be one of state language had been included.

The Governor General of Pakistan Mohammad Ali Jinnah had arrived Dhaka on 19th March, 1948. He made speech on the Racecourse Ground at Ramna at a civic reception on 21 March and at Curzon Hall at the Convocation of University of Dhaka on 24 March. In



both the occasions he declared Urdu as the National Language of Pakistan defying the demand from Bengali. During his speech at convocation he declared, "Urdu, and only Urdu shall be national language of Pakistan". The students present there erupted in denial saying 'No'. The language movement spread all over the east Bengal. During the visit of Prime Minister Liakat Ali Khan in 1948, he again declared Urdu as the sole state language. Students protested again with rejection.

In 1948 at the Nikhil Pakistan Education Summit it was proposed to write the Bengali language in Arabic letter. Dr. Mohammad Shahidullah protested it. With the conspiracy to write Bengali in Arabic letter 'East Bengal Language Committee' was formed on March, 1949. Strong protest came from University of Dhaka. In 11th March, 1950 'University of Dhaka National Language Action Committee' was formed making Mr. Abdul Matin as the convener. In the National Assembly held in 1950 it was suggested by the Principal Committee to make only Urdu as the state language of Pakistan. Countrywide rallies- procession were being held. When in 1951, Liakat Ali Khan was assassinated, Khaja Nazimuddin became the Prime Minister. On the basis of a speech made by him on Dhaka gave the language movement a new dimension and a complete form. In this way, the final stage was being unveiled.

### **The Final Stage of the Language Movement**

On 27 January at Paltan Ground; the new Prime Minister Khaja Nazimuddin declared that Urdu shall be the state language of Pakistan. Resultantly, language movement was fueled freshly. University of Dhaka National Language Action Committee called for meeting and student strike on 30th January. On 31 January, All Party Central Language Action Committee' was formed chaired by the Awami Muslim League Chairman Abdul Hamid Khan Bhshani. Kazi Golam Mahabub was the convener. In this meeting, the whole country was called for hartal, meeting and procession. At this time, suddenly the chief minister of East Pakistan imposed Section-144 banning all kind of gathering, protest etc. With this declaration Dhaka was erupted like a volcano in protest. The student could agreed with the legislative ban by imposing section 144 in no way.

On the 20 February, a meeting of the Shorbodolio Rashtrobhasha Shongrm Porishad was held at the central office of Awami Muslim League. A contradiction rose against the breaking of section 144. Most of the members were against the decision at first. But, Abdul Matin, Oli Ahad, Golam Mahbub; such leaders were rock steady to defy the section 144. At last decision was taken positively to break the curfew.

At the morning on 21 February at 11.00 am the Amtola of University of Dhaka (at present Dhaka Medical College) students gathering became a sea of mass. Thousands of students from various school and colleges of Dhaka city gathered here. Some of the leaders urged the students not to defy section 144. But, the student leaders were determined on their decision. In the meeting they decided to break section 144 in rallies of small groups. When students begun their rally chanting 'we demand Bengali as state language - Rashtro Bhasha Bangla Chai' police started battenning and lobbing tear shell.

In return, students also started to throw pebbles and stones to the police. Agitated students gathered near the Dhaka Medical College and started to advance towards East Bengal Legislative Assembly; police opened fire at the students. Abdus Salam, Abul

Barkat, Rafique Uddin Ahmed, Abdul Jabbar took martyrdom on the spot. At the time the Legislative Assembly was on going. Hearing about the fire, along with some legislative Abdur Rashid Tawrkabagish left the assembly and reached to the place of incident.

The next day on 22 February, a mass protest broke out against the brutality. Public brought out mourning rallies for the martyrs. Police and Military again batted the mass, opened fire and used bayonet. As a result, many died including Shaifur Rahman. Many were arrested. Other students made a monument (Shahid Meenar) during the night before 23 February at the place where the students were killed. Later, police demolished the monument. In 1963, Shahid Meenar was constructed with the design and planning of artist Hamidur Rahman in place of the temporary Shahid Meenar. During the Liberation War, the Pak-military again demolished the shahid meenar and which was again reconstructed in 1972 as per the same design.



Picture : Central Shahid Meenar

Language Movement was still in action. Bengali was included as the national language for Pakistan in the Pakistan National Assembly in face of severe protest and campaign. A bill was passed accepting Bangla as the National Language along with Urdu from a proposal made by a member of National Assembly; Mr. Adel Uddin Ahmed. Bengali language had been honored by its inclusion as one of the national language by the constitution in 1956.

### **The Significance of Language Movement**

Language movement is an extraordinary event in the history of Bangladesh. This was the first protest and remonstrance, the first impulse for the Bengali Nationality against the differentiated attitude of Pakistani State. The Bengali nationality had been severely maltreated through ignoring, deprivation, and exploitation by the West Pakistani Government from the creation of Pakistan in 1947. Dishonoring the mother tongue Bengali stirred the sentiment of the whole Bengali nation. They understood that nothing; their language, their culture, their economy is safe on the hand of the Pakistani. In this way, the seed of Bengali nationality had been sown among the Bengalis. As a result, it was possible of Nationalist Political Movement for attaining autonomy during the sixties. This has the penultimate result of demand for the independence and afterwards the birth of a new country Bangladesh through victory from the liberation war by the brave Bengali.

### **Importance of Shahid Dibosh and International Mother Language Day**

The 21 February has been commemorated each year as Shahid Dibosh for the Bengali form the following year of the Language Movement in 1952. Every year in the midnight at 12.01 am on 21 February including the president and prime minister of the country; all the people lay flowers and bouquets on the Shahid Meenar to pay homage to the martyrs of the language. The procession and pageant song at the dawn of the 21 February has become an indispensable part of the Bengali culture. After the independence of

Bangladesh, 21 February has been declared as public Holiday. On this auspicious day various cultural events are held to commemorate the importance of Shahid Dibosh with a view to maintain a continuous consciousness Bengali nationality.

The honor of mother language had been secluded by blood of the Bangali nation in 21 February in 1952. This day has been accredited by the international community as an extraordinary incident in the world history for our language and Shahid Dibosh. '21 February' has been declared as 'International Mother Language Day' on 17 November, 1999 in the general assembly of UNESCO in Paris. Since 2000, this day has been observed in the international arena with proper honor and manifesto. The small ethnic groups and diverge cluster of people in our country has their identical language and culture. Various steps has been initiated to protect their language and culture.

**Task:**

1. Identify the political significance of Language Movement.
2. Find out the reasons for declaring Shahid Dibosh as International Mother Language Day.

**Political Activities**

There were mainly three political parties or ideology during the period of formation of Pakistan in 1947.

1. Muslim League representing political conduit of the religious ideology.
2. National Congress of non communal and democratic philosophy.
3. Communist Party of the revolted societal equality.

**Muslim League and Its Non-democratic Activities**

After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, the Nikhil Bharat Muslim League was renamed as Pakistan Muslim League. Muslim League started its journey as the ruler of the new party. From the very beginning, the party was fully controlled by the Urdu speaking west Pakistani leaders. The Muslim League leaders from West Pakistan adopted the policy of disparity against the Bengalis and started to oppress them in various issues forgetting the effort, initiative and self-sacrifice made by Bengali leaders during the partition for a separate state. The dedicated Bengali leaders of Muslim League such as AK Fazlul Haque, Hossain Shahid Suhrawardy, Abul Hasim had been ignored. Gradually, Muslim League was alienated from the mass.

During the period after 1947, the Muslim League in Bengal became entangled in internal conflict. The party became divided in to two different ideologies. One was the follower of Suhrawardi-Hashim and the other one was the follower of Khaja Nazimuddin -Akram Khan. Follower of the first ideology was generous, democratic, reformative and the later one was the submissive associates of the conservative West Pakistanis. This internal conflict made the party weak as an organization. Besides, the ruler from the West Pakistan always tried to repress and oppress these leaders in support of reformation.

Severe crisis outbroke in the country due to the faulty policy of Muslim League. The government was not interested in the development of the east Bengal at all. Gradually, their differentiating attitude towards east Bengal has been becoming prominent. The

disparity was remarkable in every sector of economy, politics, culture etc. Public support favoring Muslim League started to deplete rapidly after 1948.

### **Newly formed Political Parties**

A number of leaders of Muslim League became very upset of their non-democratic attitude, suppressive measures, huge disparity between West and East Pakistan, dishonoring the Bengali language etc. The oppositions of Muslim League came forward to create new political party. In addition to the existing Congress and Communist Party, various parties like People's Freedom League, Gono Azadi League, Pakistan Democratic Youth League, Nezam-E-Islam, Khilfat-E-Rabbani, Krishok-Shramik Party have been formed. But, the major blow for Muslim League was the partition within itself. The leaders of the reformative group of this party from Bengal formed Awami Muslim League. Under these circumstances in Bengal, more than one political party has been formed against Muslim League.

### **Awami League from Awami Muslim League**

The group in the Muslim League believing in democracy and supportive to reformation; have been oppressed and deprived by the other group of leaders from west Pakistan. This reactive part of the ruling party was gradually detached from the mass people because of their incapability to run the state. On the other hand, public support for the deprived group of the Muslim League was increasing. Among the national leaders; Suhrawardi, Abul Hashim, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani started to protest against the traditional policy of the Muslim League and they felt the necessity to organize a new political party. In May 1948, Suhrawardi called a meeting for creation an opposition party. In continuation to this, discussion related to formation of a new party had been going on with the leaders of west Pakistan opposing Muslim League. After all these initiatives and preparation; a worker summit had been organized at the Rose Garden in Dhaka on 23-24 June in 1949. 300 top level representatives participated in the meeting. In the meeting unanimously it was decided to form a new political party named 'East Pakistan Awami Muslim League'. A forty member committee was also formed having Maulana Bhashani as Chairman, Shamsul Haque as Secretary, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as Joint-secretary. The first public meeting of this newly formed political party was held at Armanitola in Dhaka.

From the very inception of the Awami Muslim League, they took a 42 point platform with emphasis on provincial autonomy. The main agendas from them were accepting Bengali as state language, one vote of one person, democracy, writing of the constitution, parliamentary government, regional autonomy and reduction of disparity between west and east Pakistan. Awami Muslim League was the first successful opposition party in the history of Bengal. Formation of this party filled the gap of the opposition party. The party gained public support because of its strong voice against the Muslim League and ill treatment from the Pakistani ruler. The played a vital role in formation united front coalition in 1954 and its unprecedented victory over Muslim League. After this, Muslim League became a name only party.

From the very inception of the Awami Muslim League; the party believed in non- ethnicity and secularism. As a consequence, the party removed the word 'Muslim' from its name and became 'Awami League' in 1955 and opened its door for the people of other religion. The party became real party for the mass people by raising Six Point Agenda in 1966. After this, the full political control of East Pakistan became concentrated on Awami League.

Achieving majority in the election of 1970 proves the vast popularity of the party. It is Awami League who led the nation to achieve victory in the Freedom Fight in 1971 and Bangladesh pulled off independence.

### **United Front Coalition & Provincial Election (1954)**

Formation of the United Front Coalition was an important milestone in political history of Bengal. In fact, the election was a 'revolution through ballot' against the exploitation of the ruler and their alliance of Pakistan. It became necessary to consider of formation new political organization due to grouping within the Muslim League, internal conflict, failure in administration, differentiated policy for individual regions within the very beginning of creation of Pakistan. Specially, because of the acute failure of Muslim League in the eastern dominion various parties were formed such as Awami Muslim League, Peasants-Workers Party, East Pakistan Communist Party, Nizam-E-Islami, Pakistan National Congress etc. Though, it was decided previously to hold the election for the East Pakistan Constituent Assembly in 1951, the Muslim League Government postponed the date of election time and again on vague grounds from their anxiety of defeat. At last the date for the election in East Pakistan was fixed on 8th March 1954.

### **The Background of Formation of United Front Coalition (Juktafront) and its 21-Points Charter**

Muslim League was the oldest and largest party among the political parties in Bengal before the election of 1954. Besides, Muslim League was leading the provincial government of east Bengal. As a result, the newly formed parties in the east Pakistan planned to form coalition as a strategy to defeat Muslim League in the election in 1954. Resultantly, the decision to form United Front Coalition was taken at the council of Awami Muslim League in Mymensing on 14th November, 1953. The coalition consisted of four main opposition parties; Awami Muslim League led by Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Peasants-workers Party led by A K Fazlul Haque, Nizam-E-Islami of Maulana Atahar Ali and the leftist Democratic Party of Hazi Danesh. The electoral symbol for the United Front Coalition was 'Boat'. The coalition declared 21-point charter of election manifesto by selecting the main demands made on the 42 point election manifesto of Awami Muslim League. Abul Mansur Ahmed was the main person to write the 21-point charter with the view to reflect the hopes and expectations from the mass people of East Bengal. The points are briefly mentioned below:

1. To Establish Bengali as one of the state language of Pakistan
2. To dissolve the Zamindari System without compensation and distribute the surplus land among the landless people
3. To nationalize the Jute Industry.
4. To establish co-operative agricultural system to develop agriculture.
5. To set up salt factory
6. To generate employment for the mohajer-artist-technician class.
7. To eradicate flood and famine through digging canal and arranging irrigation.

8. To make the country self dependent on food and industry
9. To introduce free and mandatory primary education.
10. Education through mother language, reduce the gap between government and private schools and providing government assistance favoring every school.
11. To convert the University of Dhaka and Rajshahi University as autonomous body.
12. To reduce the administrative expenses. Ministers salary no to be more than Taka one thousand.
13. To take necessary steps to control bribery, corruption and nepotism.
14. To cancel the dark laws including Public Protection Act and Ordinance.
15. To separate the Judicial Department from the Administrative Department.
16. To make the chief minister's residence 'the Bardhawan House' as Bengali Language Research Center.
17. To construct a monument commemorating the martyrs of 52's language movement.
18. To declare 21 February as government holiday considering it as Shahid Dibosh.
19. To provide full autonomy to East Bengal as per 1940-Lahore Resolution.
20. In no way the validity of Legislative Assembly is extended.
21. If any seats in the Legislative Assembly become vacant, it should be filled in within three months by giving bi-election.

### **Result of the Election**

The election of 8 March in 1954 was the first general election held in East Bengal with exercise of unrestrained and universal voting right. 37.19% voter voted in the election. Officially the result of the election was declared on 2nd April. The coalition attained 223 seats out of the total 309 seats. The ruling party Muslim League obtained 9 seats, Pakistan National Congress 24, Tafshili Federation 27 Khelafat E Rabbani 2, Christian 1, Buddhist 1 and communist party obtained 4 seats.

### **The Significance of the Election**

The election in 1954 was the united protest by the Bengali against the lawlessness, discrimination, administrative failure of Muslim League. The general public of East Bengal gave a message to the Muslim League that they no longer cherished among to them. The immense popularity of the leaders of the coalition especially the young leaders; the way of opportunity widened for creation of future leaders of East Bengal. Because, many experienced leaders of Muslim League was defeated against the young leaders of the coalition. On the other hand, the Awami Muslim League having maximum seats ensured their strong leadership in East Bengal in the future. Through this election, secularism was established in the politics of East Bengal. Huge unreliability on the Muslim League and non-bengali leaders took place among the mind of the people of East Bengal. They realized that their freedom is not possible by the West Pakistani and their associates in this country. For this reason, the inhabitants of the East Bengal fully supported the autonomy on the basis of their ideology of Bengali Nationality.

### **The Afterward Episodes of the Election**

A fourteen member cabinet of ministers was formed by the United Front Coalition under the leadership of A K Fazlul Haque. In addition to Chief Ministry, he undertook the Finance, Revenue and State ministries. Among other members; Abu Hossain Serker got Judicial, Health and Local Government, Syed Azizul Haque got Education Ministry and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had been assigned the Agriculture, Co-operative & Village Development Department.

### **Cancellation of the Cabinet of 'United Front Coalition' and Administration of the Central Government in East Bengal**

The unprecedented victory of the United Front Coalition was not perceived positively by the Muslim League. They started conspiring against the coalition government. The central government became annoyed of the sentimental speech of A K Fazlul Haque about the two Bengal during his visit to Kolkata. The declaration of 21 February as Public Holiday and Bardhawan House and Bengali Language Research Centre also aggravated the central government. They were searching for the opportunity to dethrone the coalition cabinet. Meantime, there occurred bloody riot in front of the Central Jail between the Jail Authority and the local people and huge clash broke out at Adamjee Jute Mill between the workers of Bengal and Bihar. As a result the central government started condemning the coalition cabinet for their failure to maintain law and order situation. During the same time an interview of A K Fazlul Haque was published in the New York Times mentioning that he wants the independence of East Bengal. On this ground, the Muslim League government declared him as a traitor to the state. At last, the central Muslim League government initiated the Administration by Governor in East Bengal cancelling the cabinet of United Front Coalition on 30 May, 1954 on the basis of Section 92(Ka) under India Administration Act 1935. The administration of the coalition cabinet lasted till 2nd June 1955. The ruling of the United Front Coalition cabinet came to an end after 56 days. Mainly, because of the conspiracy of the Muslim League and the Central Government and internal clash within the coalition; the government tends to change frequently. Within four years, seven cabinet of ministers had to be changed. The central government declared ruling by Governor for three times. The democratic system could not be evolved due to clash for power in the coalition and conspiracy from the central government.

**Individual Work:** Describe the role played by Awami league in the election of 1954.

### **The Constitution of 1956**

Constitution is the supreme law of a country. The administration of a country is run by its constitution. The demand was raised at different stages for drafting the constitution immediately after the birth of Pakistan in 1947. The demand was more prominent from East Bengal. The claim and expectations were from the mass people of the East Bengal for a new constitution so that the provincial autonomy is achieved. But, the ruling Muslim League wanted to change East Bengal into a colony to them. Initially, the new country Pakistan had been run by the Government of India Act 1947. Pakistan Constituent Assembly was formed by the public representatives elected in 1946. The assembly was

responsible to act as the new parliament and write the constitution of Pakistan. But, the task of the assembly used to be disrupted by the disinclination of the ruling bodies. At last, to write the constitution of Pakistan; the constituent assembly formed a Committee of Basic Principle was formed on March 1949. In this committee there were few representatives from East Bengal. After much delay, the committee submitted its proposition and report after long eighteen months. On the various suggestions in the report the people of East Bengal were deprived in all aspects. As a result, when the report was published in September 1950, it caused huge protest in East Bengal and they denied the suggestions made by the report. Afterwards, the committee submitted its second report in 1952 and the third report in 1953. But, the adoption of the constitution remained unresolved. At last, the Governor General of Pakistan took the responsibility to draft the constitution for the country. The leaders from both of the dominion were able to reach an accord in this regard. On the basis of this the constitution was written on 1956. After adoption, the constitution was active for only two years. In 1958, when Ayub Khan clamped Martial Law in the country the constitution was declared unworkable and with this the constitutional rule came to an end in Pakistan.

## Exercise

### Multiple Choice of Question:

1. Under whose leadership the first organization for language movement 'Tamuddin Mazlish' was formed?
  - a) Dr. Kazi Motaher Hossain
  - b) Professor Abul Hashem
  - c) Mr. Abul Mansur Ahmed
  - d) Dr. Mohammad Shahidullah
2. In 1948, Language Movement Action Committee was formed for the second time-
  - i) To give it a political shape of the language movement.
  - ii) To include Bengali in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly
  - iii) To protest writing Bengali in Arabic alphabet.

Which of the following is correct?

- a) i
- b) ii
- c) i & iii
- d) ii & iii

### Read the following paragraph and answer question 3 and 4

A program on folk song was being aired on the television. Mithila was watching the program with interest. But, his younger brother was trying to change the channel to watch English cartoon. According to Mithun's opinion; only village people are the listener of those songs. Her sister's fondness of this type of song does not match her.



3. Mithila is inspired by perception of which movement?
  - a) Non Co-operation movement
  - b) Khilafat Movement
  - c) Language Movement
  - d) Movement for right to self determination
4. Motivated by the above perception Mithila could be -
  - i) A patriot.
  - ii) Nationalist
  - iii) Protesting

Which of the following is correct?

- a) i  
b) i & ii  
c) ii & iii  
d) i, ii & iii

### Creative Question

In the election of Sabujnagar small political parties made alliance to defeat the ruling influential leader. They announced a manifesto with many commitments to fulfill the people's expectations. They extended their full support to them with keeping overall trust over the allied party. As a consequence of this election the allied party won by massive votes and leader of the said ruling party lost by a big margin.

- who was the first president of Awami League ?
- why Awami Muslim League was formed ?
- The small political parties of Shobujnagar were united after taking lesson from which election before independence ?
- Election can't be won only being in power and influential. Justify the statement in light of content.

2. Palash sent a message to his friend 's birthday in writing 'SHUVA JANNMODIN' through Mobile Phone. Dabid, developed in western culture did not support this work. Dabid anticipated the traditional 'Happy Birthday' in English.

- Who did announce the 'Urdu as the state language of Pakistan' at Dhaka University convocation in 24 march of 1948 ?
- Why East bangla language Committee, 1949 was formed ?
- Which impact of movement is seen into the mind of Polash ?
- Do you think David's thinking is against the evolve of bangla language ? Give argument.

## **Chapter Eleven**

# **Military Rule and the Movement for Right to Self Determination (1958 - 1969)**

Since its emergence, the government system in Pakistan was always seemed to be overpowered by autocracy and bureaucracy. Apart from this the influence of army was also evident and this gradually intensified. Army was looking for the opportunity to grab the power. General Iskander Mirza was selected as the first president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 23 March in 1956. During his regime the army started overshadowing the politics in Pakistan. Iskander Mirza obstructed democratic practices in various ways. His conspiracy prompted the central cabinet to fall several times. The confrontation between Awami League and Krishak Sramik Party reached to its peak in East Pakistan. And at one stage Deputy Speaker Shahed Ali succumbed to death due to a head injury received from the opposition Krishak Sramik Party members during a session of the Assembly in East Pakistan. His death resulted in unruliness in Pakistani politics and Iskander Mirza took the opportunity to proclaim the martial law.

**After the end of this chapter we will be able to-**

- describe the situation ensued from military intervention;
- describe the contexts and effect of India-Pakistan war in 1965;
- explain the disparities between East and West Pakistan;
- analyze the impact of six points demands in Bangalees' movement for autonomy;
- explain the significance of historic Agartala case;
- describe eleven points;
- describe the background and effect of mass upsurge in 1969; and
- be aware of protecting the interest and the rights of the country.

### **Martial Law in 1958**

President Iskander Mirza proclaimed martial law by compelling the parliamentary government of Malik Feroz Khan to step down on 7 October, 1958. Major General Omrao Khan was appointed the Martial Law Administrator in East Pakistan but in a few days General Ayub Khan assumed to the presidency through a coup against Iskander Mirza.

### **Basic Democracy of Ayub Khan**

After consolidating the power in 1958, General Ayub Khan initiated to bring about absolute changes in the government system and politics in Pakistan. He abandoned the traditional democratic practices and introduced a strange and new electoral process. It was based on a concept called 'Basic Democracy'. Basic Democracy is a sort of restricted democracy in which a few number of people would enjoy the privilege of electing the president. An ordinance was proclaimed to introduce Basic Democracy in 1959. Initially Basic Democracy had four tiers such as.

1. Union council (in the villages) and town and union committees (in urban areas)
2. Thana council in East Pakistan and Tahsil council in West Pakistan
3. District council
4. Divisional council.

The councils were consisted of elected and nominated members as well.

There were 40000 electoral units in each part of Pakistan totaling the number to 80000 in the country. The members of this Basic Democracy were the Basic Democrats or BD members. People participation was limited in electing BD members. BD members were the valid electors. None but these BD members could elect the President and the members of the National and Provincial Legislative Councils. Ayub Khan became the president for the following five years after winning the confidence votes of these members. Thus he also gained the authority to formulate a constitution for the country. The new constitution was made to public on 1 March 1962 and the martial law was withdrawn on 8 June.

**Individual work:** What were the characteristics of Ayub Khan's Basic Democracy?

### **Movement against Military rule**

Suhrawardy was taken into custody on 30 January 1964 for his alleged anti-state conspiracy. The news of Suhrawardy's arrest sparked students' reaction in East Pakistan. They called for strike on 1 February and brought out processions. The strike continued at a stretch till 5 February. This student program originated anti-Ayub movement in East Pakistan. The government closed the University of Dhaka sine die. Students confronted huge policing activities on them including arrests and tortures. When Ayub Khan announced the enactment of a new constitution on March 1, the student community in East Pakistan staged demonstrations and abstained from attending classes. Intellectuals, teachers, politicians, and others extended their support to the students' movement opposing the new constitution. Ayub Khan and the East Pakistan Governor Monaem Khan took strict oppressive measures to control the student movement.

Student movement got momentum when the Sharif Commission Report on education issues was published in August 1962. The recommendations in the report poised threat of jeopardizing students' interests and rights. This resulted in a massive student movement. This movement is known as 'bashottir shikkha andolon' (Education Movement, '62). There were demonstrations every day from 15 August to 10 September. While a hartal was being observed on 17 September, several persons were killed and hundreds of people were injured in police shootouts. This movement forced the government to suspend the policy recommendations of Sharif Commission. Students turned to a very vital force in anti-Ayub movement as a result of this incident.

When the martial law was suspended on 8 June 1962, rights for politics under the banner of political parties revived. Ayub Khan himself formed a political party named Convention Muslim League. At the same time Suhrawardy urged all the opposition parties to be united to form a coalition. As a result, National Democratic Front or NDF was formed comprising Awami League, Nezam-e-Islami, National Awami Party,

Council Muslim League and Muslim League under Nurul Amin's leadership. The aims of this front were to regain democracy and to switch back to the constitution of 1956. This front became popular very quickly.

Suhrawardy died in December 1963. Awami League deserted NDF at the beginning of 1964. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was elected the General Secretary of the party. Awami League started its new journey under his leadership. It made NDF inactive. However, in the presidential election on 2 January 1965, Awami league, NAP, Council Muslim League, Nezame-Islami, etc. joined again to form a Combined Opposition Party (COP) so that they could nominate a single candidate against Ayub Khan. COP nominated Fatima Jinnah the younger sister of Muhammad Ali Jinnah to contest for the presidency of Pakistan. Ayub Khan managed to have supports of the Basic Democrats to his side before the election. Though people expressed their enthusiasm about Fatima Jinnah, Ayub Khan won the election race and became the president. National and provincial Legislative Council election was held after the presidential election. Ayub Khan's Convention Muslim League won the majority in this election too.

### **India-Pakistan War in 1965**

When India and Pakistan emerged as two separate countries in 1947, an enmity ensued between them centering Kashmir. Both India and Pakistan considered Kashmir as their inseparable part. The first war between these two countries was about the control of Kashmir. But the war ended as the United Nations intervened and mediated. The second war between these two countries was again about Kashmir in 1965. Ayub Khan had a long cherished desire to invade India and capture Kashmir. Tension aroused in the Indian part of Kashmir when the Kashmiri leader Shiekh Abdullah was arrested. Ayub Khan availed himself of this opportunity. He attempted to create rowdiness in Kashmir by infiltrating a few saboteurs at first. At last when Pakistan forces attacked Indian territory, the war began. From the very onset the Indian Army met with considerable success. They forced back Pakistani soldiers marched forward to Lahore. In such a deplorable situation of Pakistan, Bangalee soldiers fought with a great courage and saved Lahore from a fall. On the seventeenth day after the war had ensued Pakistan was on the verge of a total wretchedness. Some western countries and the Soviet Union intervened and used diplomatic tools to mediate a ceasefire. The Soviet Union Premier Alexei Kosygin hosted ceasefire negotiations in January 1966 and an agreement was signed between India and Pakistan. With the signing of this treaty, the second Kashmir war ended.

The second Kashmir war aroused a strong anti-Ayub stance among the common people of East Pakistan. The reason behind this was the obvious absence of any defense mechanism in the East Pakistan. This unguarded land could be invaded by Indian forces anytime. During this time even the administrative communications between the East and the West parts of Pakistan were totally cut off. Ayub Khan failed to ensure the security of East Pakistan despite the life risking valiant contributions of Bangalee soldiers to protect Lahore. Besides, food scarcity, price hike of daily commodities augmented people's miseries as the East Pakistan remained detached from the whole world during the war. This was an eye opener of the vulnerability of East Pakistan in terms of military and economic activities and these issues were reflected later in the six points movement.

**Discrimination towards East Pakistan**

The Pakistan state emerged in accordance with the proposals made in Lahore Resolution. But East Bangla did not get the status of a separate sovereign state as it was mentioned in the fundamentals of Lahore Resolution. East Bangla had to strive for autonomy through movements and agitations for long 24 years. During this long span of time West Pakistani rulers adopted the policy of discrimination and oppression against the people of East Pakistan in political, administrative, military, economic, educational and cultural areas. In protest of this, movement for autonomy and independence originated in East Pakistan i.e. in East Bangla.

**Political discrimination**

Since emergence in 1947, East Pakistan was made crippled politically and kept dependent on West Pakistan. Though it was mentioned in Lahore Resolution that the states were to be autonomous, Pakistani rulers were reluctant about this matter from the very beginning. They defied democracy and continued ruling the country through autocracy and military rule. They imposed colonial rule on East Pakistan and worked for the prosperity of West Pakistan by depriving the East in every field of social, political and economic activities. They created stalemate in the political atmosphere of East Pakistan by oppressing and suppressing the political leaders. They repeatedly sent the national leaders including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to illegitimate imprisonments. In spite of being majority, Bangalees had a very few representatives in the Cabinet of Pakistan. To create hindrance for the democratic process, Pakistani rulers showed their disinclination to hold elections for the National and Provincial Legislative Assemblies. They removed the elected government of Juktafront from the power unlawfully in 1954. Later they dissolved the East Pakistan cabinets repeatedly to collapse the governance. Finally the Government of Pakistan imposed martial law and withheld people's democratic rights.

**Administrative indiscrimination**

The officials of the civil service were the key force in the Pakistani administration. In 1962 there were only 119 Bangalees among 954 high ranking officials in the Ministries. In the central government offices there were 42000 employees, among them only 2900 were Bangalees. As the capital was set up in Karachi in 1947, the West Pakistanis got employment in a large scale in all government offices. It may not be mentioned that the West Pakistanis enjoyed the absolute right to hold almost all high positions in the central government offices. All the head-offices were in West Pakistan. It was not possible for the Banglaees to go there to compete for a job because of the geographical distance. As Bangla did not get the status of the state language in Pakistan till 1956, success in the competitive exams for government jobs was not easy for the Bangalees. In East and West Pakistan number of gazetted officials was 1338 and 3708 respectively; and the number of non-gazetted officials was 26310 and 82944 respectively. In the Foreign Service in 1962 there was only 20.8% representation of East Pakistan. In embassies in the foreign countries there were 60 ambassadors from West Pakistan out of 69.

**Discrimination in the army**

Rule of disparity of the West Pakistanis over East Pakistan was clearly marked in the military affairs. Representation of Bangalees in the army was very negligible. From the very beginning Punjabis had been occupying the top posts of the army. They resorted to

the policy of keeping a distance from Bangalees. In the recruitment policy of the army they adopted a quota system allocating 60% Punjabis, 35% Pathans and only 5% from other parts of the whole Pakistan including East Pakistan. There was a very negligible increase in the number as a consequence of the pressing demands of the Bangalee. A census in 1955 revealed that among 2211 army officers Bangalees were only 82. In 1966 there was only one Bangalee among the 17 top ranking officials. During this time only 5% of the army officers were Bangalees. Among the total 5,00,000 soldiers of the army Bangalees were only 20,000 figuring only a 4% representation. East Pakistan did not get appropriate attention in the budget allocations for the army too. During Ayub Khan's regime 60% of the total outlay of the government was allocated for the army. East Pakistan was liable for supplying the major part of the budget but the defense of East Pakistan suffered from negligence.

### **Economic disparity**

East Pakistan suffered from the highest disparity caused by the West Pakistan in economic affairs. The degree of exploitation by the West Pakistan was terrible. As a result East Pakistan could never be economically self-sufficient. Provincial government did not have any authority to exercise in currency management and economic control. Under the supervision of the central government all types of income of East Pakistan was drained to West Pakistan. Head-offices of banks, insurance and commercial organizations including The Central Bank were in West Pakistan. For this money was laundered to West Pakistan very easily. East Pakistan had to rely on West Pakistan for the required monetary allocations. The surplus financial savings remained deposited in West Pakistan and for this East Pakistan never had any growth in the capital formation.

All types of planning were designed and prepared in the Headquarter of the Central Government in West Pakistan. As there was no representation of the Bangalees, West Pakistan rulers deprived East Pakistanis of their lawful rights. Since inception, three five-year plans were adopted in Pakistan. In the first one the government outlay from budget allocations in East and West Pakistan was 113 crore and 500 crore respectively. In the second one the budget allocations were 950 crore for East Pakistan and 1350 crore for West Pakistan. In the third five-year plan the budget allotments were 36% and 63% respectively. The maximum portion of the allocated outlay for the renovation and development of the capital was for West Pakistan. 570 crore taka was spent in 1956 for the development works in Karachi, which was 56.4% of the total government expenditure. At that time the rate of total government expenditure in East Pakistan was 5.10%. 300 crore taka was spent for constructing Islamabad till 1967; whereas, the money spent for Dhaka was 25 crore taka. In the matter of allocating foreign aids East Pakistan got only 26.6%. During the period of 1947-1970 East Pakistan contributed 54.7% of the total income from exports. Though they exported more, they had only 31.1% share of the total import. The surplus from exports was spent for the imports of West Pakistan. Though the low-cost raw materials were available in East Pakistan, most of the mills and factories were set up in West Pakistan. The few industries grew in East Pakistan were owned by West Pakistanis. So for industrial matters East had to rely on the West. There was no barrier for anyone who went to West Pakistan taking gold and money with him/her; but there were government restrictions on bringing gold and money from West Pakistan.

**Disparity in education**

Bangalees experienced discrimination in the field of education too. West Pakistanis continued their attempts with the plan to keep Bangalees illiterate; whereas they chalked out massive plans for the spread of education in West Pakistan. So they did not undertake any plan for the improvement of education in East Pakistan. Besides, they attempted to strike the education system of East Pakistan by replacing Bangla with Urdu as the medium of education. They also conspired to introduce a system of writing Bangla in Arabic language. In the matter of allocating budget for education, extreme disparity was maintained between the two wings of Pakistan. From the total allocation for education during the period of 1955 to 1967, a sum of 2084 million rupee was allotted for West Pakistan in contrast to 797 million rupees for East Pakistan. West Pakistan got 30 scholarships out of the total 35 in Pakistan and East Pakistan received the remaining 5.

**Social discrimination**

West Pakistanis enjoyed more privileges than Bangalees in the field of roads and highways, school-colleges, courts and offices, hospitals, postal services, telephone, telegraph, electricity etc. Most of the West Pakistanis got the benefit of social welfare and service oriented activities. As a result, West Pakistanis enjoyed a better living standard.

**Cultural disparity**

Language, literature and culture of the two wings of Pakistan were quite different. East Pakistan had 56% of the total population. Moreover, Bangla language and culture had the heritage of thousands of years. On the other hand, 45% of the total population lived in West Pakistan but there existed different languages, nationalities, and cultures. Urdu speaking people were only 3.27%. Still West Pakistani rulers engaged themselves in conspiring to wipe out Bangla language which the majority people used to speak as well as the highly enriched Bengali culture. At the very beginning, they tried to eradicate Bangla language and had the attempt to use Arabic alphabets in writing Bangla. Though Tagore's songs, plays and literatures heightened Bengali culture, they attempted to forbid them with a view to give a blow to Bengali culture. They even tried to create hindrance in the celebration of Pahela Baishakh mentioning that the festivity had Hindu influence.

**Group work:** Express the lack of equality in the attitude of the Central Government of Pakistan toward East Pakistan in military, economic and educational issues.

**Six points program and Bangalee nationalism**

To get rid of the colonial rule and exploitation of Pakistanis, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced the six points program in 1966. The purpose of Bangabandhu was to free East Pakistan from the discrimination through realising six points demand. Basically after the end the war between India and Pakistan, Bangabandhu raised voice against the extreme negligence of the West Pakistan Government to the security of East Pakistan and limitless disparity toward East Pakistan in political, economic, administrative, military, educational affairs as well. Opposition leaders convened a conference on 5-6 February in 1966 in Lahore.

conference Bangabandhu presented the 'six-points' demand which was rejected by the leaders in the conference. Bangabandhu walked out of the conference and returned to Dhaka disclosing six-points to the press. On 21 February a pamphlet titled 'amader bachar dabi: chhoy dafa karmashuchi' (our demands for survival: six-point program) was published in the name of Bangabandhu. The six-points were as follows:

1. The constitution should provide for a Federation of Pakistan in its true sense on the basis of Lahore Resolution and the parliamentary form of government with supremacy of a Legislature directly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise.
2. The federal government should deal with only two subjects: Defense and Foreign Affairs, and all other residuary subjects shall be vested in the federating states.
3. Two separate, but freely convertible currencies for two wings should be introduced; or if this is not feasible, there should be one currency for the whole country, but effective constitutional provisions should be introduced to stop the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan. Furthermore, a separate Banking Reserve should be established and separate fiscal and monetary policy be adopted for East Pakistan.
4. The power of taxation and revenue collection shall be vested in the federating units. The federation will be entitled to deposit a certain portion in the federal fund. The federal government shall use this fund to meet its expenditures.
5. The federal units shall have the full authority to regulate foreign exchange earnings and trade links. There should be two separate accounts for the foreign exchange earnings of the two wings; the foreign exchange requirements of the federal government should be met by the two wings equally or in a ratio to be fixed.
6. To safeguard regional solidarity and national security the provinces should have the authority to form and control their own militia or paramilitary force.



Picture : Demonstration in favour of Six Point program in the street of Dhaka.

The six points of Bangabandhu was accepted in the Working Committee meeting of Awami League held on 13 March 1966. Then Bangabandhu campaigned for creating public opinions in favor of the six points. He went to different places and delivered speech on this. He termed these six points as 'our demand for survival.' As a result of Bangabandhu's campaign, six-point gained public support very rapidly. Being panicked the Government of Ayub Khan started arresting the leaders and activists of Awami League. During this time Ayub Khan visited East Pakistan and delivered speech in various public meetings where he termed six point as seditious and as a threat to unity. The Government of Ayub Khan directed to arrest Bangabandhu as six points gained popularity day by day. On 7 June a general strike was observed to protest the arrest of Bangabandhu. During



hartal a number of individuals were killed in police firing. In protest of this killing opposition staged walk out from the Provincial Assembly on 8 June. By 10 May 1966, the government arrested 3500 Awami League leaders and activists. In 1968 the Government put Bangabandhu on trial accusing him in the historic Agartala Case. The case led to mass upsurge in 1969 and the Government was forced to release Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The key factor in Awami League's election manifesto in 1970 was this six points program. The Awami League sought public mandate in favor of the six points program in the general elections of 1970. A landslide victory was gained with the absolute mandate from the people of East Pakistan in favor of six-point program. Yet this six points program could not be implemented. The six points program ended with the commencement of the War of Liberation that followed the genocide caused by the Pakistani occupational forces. Afterwards Bangladesh gained independence after a freedom fight for long nine months.

Six points program was the absolute reflection of the Bangalee nationalism. It was the symbol of the hope and aspiration of Bangalees. It was the Magna Carta of our freedom. This is why it had the spontaneous support from all walks of life irrespective of religion, and caste. The measures to suppress six points program iron handedly rather aroused strong spirit of unity among Bangalees and they became more vocal for their autonomy.

#### **Historic Agartala Case (State vs. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and gong), 1968**

Since emergence, disparity between the two wings of Pakistan was gradually escalating. Large scale attachment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with the mass people made him a people's leader in East Pakistan. To keep him away from his political activities, West Pakistani government arrested him and sent behind the bars frequently. But nothing could stop Bangabandhu from his efforts to free this land. On various occasions different professionals, especially the young Bangalee members of the armed forces came in contact with him. At one stage he was attracted to armed revolution. Lt. Commander Moazzem Hossain along with a group of soldiers of Pakistan Navy met Bangabandhu. In the meeting they exchanged views on armed movement. In 1963 Bangabandhu visited Tripura secretly. In Agartala - the capital of Tripura - he met Shachindralal Singha, the then Congress leader who became the Chief Minister of Tripura later. In that meeting, Bangabandhu sent a message to the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru seeking his support for the armed movement through Shachindralal Singha. It may be mentioned that the six-point program of Bangabandhu in 1966 gained wide spread popularity in East Pakistan. Autonomy of East Pakistan became the demand of the people. Meanwhile few Bangalee officers and soldiers were getting organized for armed revolution to protest the existing disparity in the army. But the matter was uncovered by Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistani government. 1500 Bangalees were arrested in Pakistan. Bangabandhu was implicated as the main accused of this conspiracy. Bangabandhu was in jail then. A case was filed in January 1968. The Government framed the charged saying Bangabandhu led a secret meeting with Indian government officials in Agartala, the capital of Indian State Tripura. In the meeting a plan was designed to liberate East Pakistan through armed movement with the assistance from the Government of India. This is why it became known as Agartala Case. But officially the case was termed 'the State vs. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and gong'.

On 9 May 1966 Bangabandhu was released from the jail but he was again arrested under martial law at the jail gate and was taken to Dhaka Cantonment. 35 persons were accused in this case. Along with Bangabandhu the other 34 accused were Lt. Commander Moazzem Hossain, Steward Mujibur Rahman, LS Sultanuddin Ahmad, Nur Mohammad, Ahmed Fazlur Rahman CSP, Flight Sergeant Mahfiz Ullah, A. B. M. Abdus Samad, Havildar Dalil Uddin, Ruhul Quddus CSP, Flight Sergeant Md. Fazlul Haq, Bhupati Bhushan Chowdhury alias Manik Chowdhury, Bidhan Krishna Sen, Subedar Abdur Razzaque, Havildar Mujibur Rahman, Flight Sergeant Md. Abdur Razzaque, Sergeant Zahurul Haq, A.B.M. Khurshid, Khan Mohammad Shamsur Rahman CSP, AKM Shamsul Haque, Havildar Azizul Haq, Mahfuzul Bari, Sergeant Shamsul Haq, Risaldar A. K. M. Shamsul Hoque, Havildar Azizul Haque, Mahfuzul Bari, Sergeant Shamsul Haque, Major Dr. Shamsul Alam, Captain Md. Abdul Motaleb, Captain Shawkat Ali, Captain Khondkar Nazmul Huda, Captain A. S. M. Nuruzzaman, Flight Sergeant Abdul Jalil, Mahbub Uddin Chowdhury, Lt. M. M. M. Rahman, Subedar A. K. M. Tajul Islam, Md. Ali Reza, Captain Dr. Khurshid Uddin Ahmed, and Lt. Abdur Rauf.

A special tribunal was formed for the disposal of the Agartala Case. The hearing of the case started at 11 a.m. on 19 June 1968 in a chamber inside Dhaka Cantonment. There were 227 witnesses including 11 approvers. A defense team of the lawyers of the accused persons was formed under the leadership of prominent lawyer Abdus Salam Khan. On the other hand, Bangalee expatriates in England sent a renowned lawyer Sir Thomas William, MP to defend Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The government lawyers leading the case were the former foreign minister Manzur Quader and Advocate General TH Khan. The Chairman of the tribunal was Justice SA Rahman. The other members were MR Khan and Maksumul Hakim. On 29 July 1968 the hearing of the case resumed. Sir Thomas William filed a writ petition in Dhaka High Court on behalf of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman challenging the legality of the formation of the tribunal.

Anti-Ayub agitation was getting momentum in both the wings of Pakistan during the trial. In East Pakistan people's voice became stronger to realize the demand for the release of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the withdrawal of the case. Gradually the mass movement in East Pakistan turned to mass upsurge in 1969. Some political parties including Awami League, National Awami Party formed a Democratic Action Committee (DAC). At a point of turmoil, Sergeant Zahurul Haq, one of the vital accused in the case, was shot to death in Dhaka Cantonment on 15 February 1969. The news of his death led a furious mob in Dhaka on 16 February 1969. Angry mob paraded the city streets with the coffin of Sergeant Zahurul Haque. In a bid to tame the situation Ayub Khan convened a round-table meeting on 19 February 1969 in Rawalpindi. Maulana Bhashani and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were among others invited to attend the meeting. To pave the way for Bangabandhu to attend the meeting, the Government proposed to release him on parole. But the people of East Pakistan including Maulana Bhashani demanded for withdrawal of the Agartala Case rejecting the Government's proposal. At last in the face of the mass movement, the Ayub government was ultimately compelled to withdraw the Agartala Conspiracy Case. All the accused including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were released on 22 February 1969. On the occasion of the release of Bangabandhu grand public reception rally was organized at the Race Course Ground on 23 February 1969. In that mammoth rally Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was vested with the appellation of 'Bangabandhu'.

### **Impact of Agartala Case**

This case played a vital role to ignite nationalist consciousness among Bangalees. The purpose that inspired Ayub Government to lodge the case did not gain any success; rather it acted as a boomerang against Ayub Government. At this stage a public leader, Maulana Bhashani, came forward to lead political activities; and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was recognized as an unparalleled leader of the Bangalees for his roles as the spokesman of Bangalee interest and autonomy.

### **11 points movement**

During the period of 1968 to 1969 the anti-Ayub mass movement in East Pakistan reached its peak. The momentum of the movement was slowed down as the Awami League leaders got arrested for their role in the mass movement. In this circumstance students took the leadership of the movement. Students' involvement turned the mass movement to mass upsurge. At the joint initiative of Chhatra League, Chhatra Union (Matia and Menon group) and Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU), student leaders sat together at DUCSU office on 5 January 1969 and formed a united front known as Sarbadaliya Chhatra Sangram Parishad (All Party Student's Action Committee) under the leadership of Tofael Ahmed, the then Vice President of DUCSU.

Chhatra Sangram Parishad called for mass upsurge based on their 11 points demand. This 11 points program caused inspiration not only among students but also among mass people for the movement. The 11 points demand of the students also included the six points of Bangabandhu. Other important demands included the increase of educational facilities after the withdrawal of notorious DU Ordinance, freedom of speech, individual freedom, freedom of the press, nationalization of large industries, fair wage for laborers, right to form trade union, flood control and proper use of water resources, withdrawal of acts for promulgation of curfew, emergency and other repressive measures, unbiased foreign policy, immediate release of leaders and activists.

### **Mass upsurge in 1969**

The movement that developed centering students' unrest in November 1968 was no longer confined to students only. It turned into a mass movement with the participation of workers, peasants and general people. A very strong movement against the autocracy of Ayub Khan started and the movement soon engulfed the whole of the then East Pakistan turning it to mass upsurge. Focusing on the downfall of Ayub Khan, people of both the wings of Pakistan participated together in anti-Ayub movement for the first time and the movement ended with the fall of Ayub Khan. Starting from the Language Movement various nationalistic movements ensued during the decade of 1960. These movements were against the racial repressions, deprivation and disparity done to East Pakistan since the inception of Pakistan. Those factors had their impact on the mass upsurge in 1969.

The student agitation turned into a vigorous mass movement under the leadership of Maulana Bhashani. As a part of joint program, the National Awami Party, East Pakistan Workers' Federation and East Pakistan Peasants' Association arranged a public meeting at Paltan Maidan to observe the Repression Resistance Day on 6 December 1968. After the meeting was over a huge procession gathered the Governor's House. Maulana Bhashani declared a hartal the next day, following the violent clash between the police and the demonstrators. On the call of the main opposition parties a hartal was observed throughout

East Pakistan on 8 December. Awami League observed Repression Resistance Day on 10 December. A 'gherao' program was staged on 29 December. The leaders of Chhatra League, Chhatra Union (Matia and Menon group) and Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) sat together on 4 January 1969 and formed a united front known as Sarbadaliya Chhatra Sangram Parishad (All Parties Student Resistance Council). Chhatra Sangram Parishad presented 11 points program which was, by and large, a combination of the six points of Bangabandhu and few other demands. 11 points got support of the Bangalees from all strata of life very soon. During the time of turmoil in 1969, students' 11 point program was a very timely manifestation of the demands of the opposition parties in East Pakistan. This brought the opposition parties together to be united quite rapidly. On 8 January eight parties formed an alliance known as 'Gonotantrik Sangram Parishad' (Democratic Action Committee/DAC) and placed forward 8 points demand.



Picture : Martyred student leader Asad murdered by firing of Police

Thereafter at the joint initiative of 'DAC' and Chhatra Sangram Parishad a widespread mass movement developed. A hartal was observed on 14 January in Pakistan at the call of DAC. To voice against police repression Chhatra Sangram Parishad observed strike on 18 January. Police had a widespread clash with the students during the strike. On 20 January students observed hartal in East Pakistan to protest that brutality. During hartal police fired open in front of Dhaka Medical College and a student leader Asaduzzaman was killed. In protest of killing Asad, students undertook extensive program on 22, 23 and 24 January. During hartal on 24 January a huge number of people from all walks of life joined the processions. Thus the movement took the shape of a mass upsurge. Again a student of class IX, Matiur, died of police firing and a large number of people received injuries. Angry mob set fire on the office of Government dailies The Daily Pakistan and Morning News. Dhaka went out of control of the Government. Indiscriminate firing of the army and the police killed a lot of people and injured many others in the successive movement and hartal after 24 January. Sergeant Zahurul Haque, an under-trial prisoner in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, was killed brutally by gun shot in Dhaka Cantonment on 15 February. The movement triggered off in protest of the killing of Zahurul Haque on 16 February. Mob set fire on the residence of the Chief Judge of the Agartala Tribunal. In the afternoon Maulana Bhashani declared in a public meeting, 'Implement 11 points in two months and release all political detainees. If required, we will bring out Mujib of the jail by demolishing the prison like French Revolution.' Finding no other alternative, the Government imposed curfew in Dhaka. On 18 February the army bayoneted Dr. Mohammad Shamsuzzoha, the then Proctor of Rajshahi University and killed him.

After 18 February the movement spread like a wild fire and the overall situation of the country deteriorated. The opposition leaders rejected Ayub Khan's call for a round table meeting. Ayub Khan could realize that the situation would go beyond control unless the Agartala Case was withdrawn and the accused people were released. Yielding to the

pressure of mass upsurge Ayub Khan declared that he would not contest in the next presidential election.

After Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was freed from the historic Agartala Conspiracy Case, the mass movement of 1969 took a new course. Bangabandhu extended support to the 11-point demand and pledged emphatically that six-point and 11-point would be implemented. He was firm in favor of six-point and 11-point in the round table meeting with Ayub Khan held on 26 February. Meanwhile anti-Ayub movement spread in West Pakistan too. Round table meetings failed repeatedly. Law and order situation worsened in the whole country. In March 90 people died as the army fired on demonstrations. Finally, in a meeting held on 10 March, Ayub Khan declared that he would introduce Parliamentary Form of Government and the elections would be held ensuring voting rights of the adults. On 22 March Ayub Khan removed Monam Khan from the post of Governor of East Pakistan. Still the mass movement could not be tamed; rather it became irresistible. On 25 March Ayub Khan handed over the rein of the Government to the Army Chief General Yahya Khan. Thus anti-Ayub mass upsurge in East Pakistan gained success. The mass upsurge of 1969 developed a sense of class consciousness among the peasants and workers of the rural and urban areas too. Craving for a free sovereign state intensified among the people of East Pakistan. Bangalee Nationalism got its maturity and being imbued with this spirit Bangalees thronged to join the struggle for freedom.

## Exercise

### Multiple choice questions:

1. Who was nominated the first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan?
  - a. Muhammad Ali Jinnah b. Iskander Mirza
  - c. Ayub Khan d. Malik Feroz Khan
2. The principle cause of anti-Ayub student movement is
  - i. the arrest of Suhrawardy on sedition charge
  - ii. the oppressive act of the police on students
  - iii. proclamation of new constitution by Ayub Khan

Which one of the following answer is correct?

- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. i          | b. i and ii      |
| c. ii and iii | d. i, ii and iii |

### Read the following text and answer the questions no 3 and 4

The general members of Agrani Club expressed their dissatisfaction at the obstinate and non-cooperative activities the President of the club. Under the leadership of Mr. Maruf the members submitted a memorandum on their rights and claims to the club President. But the President and his cohorts turned down the plea, considering the matter illogical. For establishing justice, Mr. Maruf and his followers voiced against it.

3. Which historic event has been reflected in the measures taken by Mr. Maruf?
  - a. Raising of six-point demand      b. Formation of National Democratic Front
  - c. Movement against Ayub Khan      d. Formation of Democratic Action Committee

4. In the backdrop of that historic event
- Ayub Government got panicked.
  - Bangabandhu got arrested.
  - Bangladesh coursed toward the struggle for freedom.

Which one of the following answer is correct?

- i and ii
- ii and iii
- i and iii
- i, ii and iii

**Creative questions:**

1.

Subject	East Pakistan no. of person	West Pakistan no. of person
Ministry Officers	119	954
Central Govt. Officials	2900	42000
Gazetted officers	1338	3708
Non-gazetted officers	26310	82944

- Who contested in the Presidential Election on behalf of COP?
  - What was the structure of the Basic Democracy?
  - What kind of disparity done to East Pakistan during Pakistan regime has been presented in the above table? Explain.
  - Do you think that the disparity mentioned above is the only cause for the movement for autonomy? Justify your answer.
2. Rafique was watching a movie. The movie portrayed the struggle of a certain locality. Though the people there had courage, intelligence, and wealth, there was no representation of them in the parliament due to government's one sided policy. As a result, they were deprived of their rights to jobs, education, and economy. An uncompromising leader came forward to relive them from such dejections and repressions. He demanded rights of people of that area so that they themselves can control the trades and business, banking, defense, and relations with other countries as well as elect members of the central and provincial parliaments through direct votes and collect taxes.
- Who mediated the cease fire agreement between India and Pakistan at Taskand?
  - What was the context of the killing of Matiur?
  - What activities of Bangabandhu does the leader of text above reflect? Explain.
  - Do you believe that those demands paved the way of the struggle for freedom of Bangladesh?

## **Chapter Twelve**

### **The Election of 1970 and War of Liberation**

The election of 1970 has great significance in the history of the liberation movement of Bangladesh. When the military rulers of Pakistan enforced oppressive measures on the leaders of East Pakistan including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the people of this country organized movements against them. This was resulted in the mass uprising of 1969. As Ayub Khan stepped down following this uprising of 25 March, his successor General Yahya Khan promised re-establishment of democracy in Pakistan. He declared that the military government would relegate power to the elected public representatives. Following this route, a general election was held in 1970. Despite the triumphant victory of Awami League in that election, the rulers of Pakistan were reluctant to hand over power to the elected representatives. At one stage they fabricated various pretexts to grip the power and, at a later stage, launched attacks on the innocent people of this country. At this juncture, the people of East Pakistan, under the directives of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, vigorously got engaged in the war of liberation. As a result, Bangladesh was liberated from the aggression of its enemies on 16 December, 1971.

**After the end of this chapter we will be able to-**

- analyse the impact of the general election of 1970.
- describe the role of provisional government in leading the liberation war.
- evaluate the contributions of the freedom fighters.
- analyse the topic- Independence and Bangladesh on the world map.
- make the national flag and describe the methods of using it
- narrate the history of selection of the national anthem of Bangladesh
- explain the significance of various memorials on the liberation war
- be inspired with patriotism realizing the implication of the liberation war
- be mindful about upholding the dignity of the national flag
- be interested in preserving the memorials on the liberation war
- make posters on the events of emergence of Bangladesh in chronological order.
- draw and display pictures on the Independence Day.

#### **The general election of 1970 and the later events**

Yahya Khan came to the power and, in a radio address, promised to hand over power through the next election to the elected representatives. As a development, political activities were permitted as all sorts of restrictions were lifted from 1 January of 1970. At the same time Polling for election to the National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies were declared to be commenced on the 5 October and 22 October respectively. Though the polling dates for the elections were declared, they

were rather delayed and finally held on the 7 and 17 December respectively. However, elections in several regions knocked by the devastating cyclone and tidal bore on 12 November, were held on the 17 January in 1971.

### **The Legal framework order**

Yahya Khan, in an address to the nation on the 28 March, 1970, announced the basic principles of the legal framework order relating to election. In that address, he focused on the number of seats to be allocated for the Parliament and Provincial legislative Assembly, the procedures of polling, the time specified for the elected assembly to frame a constitution and some special measures to bring into line the two parts of Pakistan. The highlights of his speech were as follows:

1. The one unit scheme in West Pakistan shall be abolished to re-establish the provinces those existed earlier. These provinces shall come into being on 1 July, 1970.
2. There shall be a National Assembly of Pakistan consisting of 313 members of whom 13 shall be women and the five Provincial Legislative Assemblies will be composed of 621 members.

Distribution of seats for the National and Provincial Assembly

Regions	National Assembly			Provincial Assembly		
	General	Women	Total	General	Women	Total
East Pakistan	162	7	169	300	10	310
Panjab	82	3	85	180	6	186
Sindh	27	1	28	60	2	62
Northwest frontier	18	1	19	40	2	42
Baluchistan	4	1	5	20	1	21
Centrally administered Tribal areas	7	-	7	-	-	-
Total	300	13	313	600	21	621

3. The principle of one person one vote was adopted for the election. The economic and legal responsibilities and power of the two parts of Pakistan shall lie with the elected representatives.
4. The list of voters shall be prepared by June, 1970.
5. A fixed period of 120 days from the commencement of the first session of the assembly was specified for framing the constitution. It was mentioned that if the assembly failed to accomplish the task within that time, it will stand dissolved and new election schedule will be announced. It was also mentioned that the martial law shall persist until the creation and authentication of the constitution. There were directives on the election as well as the foundation of the constitution. The six basic fundamental principles of the constitution were spelt out in article 20 of the legislative framework order, which were:
  - a. Pakistan shall be a federal republic.
  - b. Islamic ideology shall form the base of the state.



- c. Legislatures shall be elected through direct elections on the basis of population and adult franchise.
- d. The fundamental rights of the citizens shall be laid down and guaranteed.
- e. Within a specified period, economic and all other disparities between different provinces and areas shall be removed.
- f. The independence of the judiciary shall be secured.

In the legislative framework order of Yahya Khan, an outline of a weak parliament instead of a supreme parliament was recommended. Hence, it had been much criticised by the political parties of East Pakistan. They demanded for abolition of the undemocratic articles of that order.

### **Election management**

On 2 July, 1969, as per the announcement of Yahya Khan, an Election Commission was formed which was headed by justice Abdus Sattar, a justice of Pakistan Supreme Court. The initial task of that Election Commission was to prepare a wide-ranging voter list. Out of the total registered voters in this list, 3,12,14,935 were from East Pakistan and 2,52,06,263 from West Pakistan. The members of ethnic minority groups were included in that voter list.

### **Political parties taking part in the election**

Though the pro-Awami League parties were interested in forming an alliance with Awami League to participate in the election of 1970, the party leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared to compete in the election independently. As a result, the political parties nominated their candidates separately for the election of 1970. A total of 781 candidates filed nomination papers for that election. Awami League had 162 candidates running for the National Assembly with the symbol of country boat. Among other parties contesting the election were, All Pakistan Central Jamiatul Ulema and Nejame Islam (45), Islamic Democratic Party (5), Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (69), Pakistan Democratic Party (81), Pakistan Muslim League (Convention -93), Pakistan Muslim League (Council-50), Pakistan Muslim League (Qayyum-65) etc.

### **Election results**

Awami League won 160 out of 162 seats in the National Assembly in the election of 1970. Awami League emerged as the single largest party in the National Assembly by winning a majority 167 seats that included the reserved seats for women. On the other hand, in the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly, Awami League held absolute majority by bagging 298 out of a total of 310 seats. During that time the members of the National Assembly and the members of the Provincial Assembly were known as MNA and MPA respectively. An analysis of the election results shows that, in National Assembly, Awami League won 75.10% of the total vote whereas in Provincial Assembly, they got a 70.48% of the total vote. Such an election outcome manifested East Pakistan as a unique region and the Bangladeshis as people with distinctive features.



Picture : After the success of the 70's election Bangabandhu surrounded by his colleagues

Awami League earned the right to initiate the formation of government by dint of its absolute majority in the National and Provincial Assemblies. But the military ruler of Pakistan Yahya Khan started to show his reluctance in handing over the power to the hands of Awami League. He was provoked by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to declare the meeting of National Assembly scheduled on 3 March adjourned. As soon as the declaration came, the common people of East Pakistan including students, workers, government and non-government officers and employees burst into violent protest. People attacked Pakistani soldiers at different places. Many people were killed and injured due to the clashes. On that day the leaders of Student League formed the, "Swadhin Bangla Chhatro Sangram Parishad". This organization called for a country-wide general strike on 2 March. The flag of Bangladesh was hoisted on this very day at a student rally at Dhaka University. Student League organised a remonstrance meeting at Paltan ground on 3 March. Bangabandhu addressed the gathering as the chief guest. Student League adopted the five point resolution in that meeting which was marked as the manifesto of independence. The proclamation of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh was made in this meeting. Moreover, the meeting called for observing half day hartal on 4 and 6 March.

The workers, officers and employees extended their support to that call of the students and observed hartals actively. The artists of Dhaka Betar (Radio) and television stayed away from taking part in programmes. Students, teachers and lawyers left their workplaces to show their adherence to the movement. The movement all over the country including Dhaka got the momentum by those three days of hartal. Many people were gunned down and injured as the police fired at many places during those public-police clashes. Yahya Khan got frightened at that circumstance and on 6 March in a betar (Radio) address he was bound to announce the convening of National Assembly on 25 March. But his announcement could not reassure the fuming wrath of the people of Bangladesh. The unprecedented leader of Bangladesh Bangabandhu could not put his trust on that declaration too. Consequently, a grand rally was arranged on 7 March at the racecourse ground (at present, Sohrawardi Uddyan) on behalf of Awami League to organize stronger movements protesting the military rule.

### **Significance of the election**

The election of 1970 had enormous significance for the emergence of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh and Bangalee nationalism. That was the most free and fair election after the election of 1954. The uniqueness that Bangalee as a nation had been voicing since 1947, the election of 1970 marked the victory of that preparedness. Moreover, the autonomy that had been claimed by the people of the Eastern province was declared illegal by the western government. The demand for the six point based autonomy was proved to be valid due to this election. Overall, following his announcement, Yahya Khan refused to transfer the power when the time for handing it over to the elected government came and, instead, directed military attacks on innocent Bangalees. That was the beginning of the armed struggle for liberation of the people of Bengal, which eventually resulted in the emergence of an independent state in the world named Bangladesh on 16th December.

**Individual work:** explain Why is the election of 1970 important on the way of the emergence of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh?

### **The Historic speech of 7 March by Bangabandhu**

There was an agitation in the political arena of Pakistan as the military rulers had not transferred the power to the elected representatives of 1970 election. The historic speech of Bangabandhu came as an obvious guideline for the nation, amid lots of anxieties and thrills prevailing all over the country. As the meeting was announced earlier, the Racecourse Maidan (at present, Sohrawardy Uddyan) was overflowed with millions of people on 7 March, 1971. The speech that Bangabandhu delivered in this gathering is a famous one in world history. His speech included four key demands:

1. lifting of the prevailing martial law;
2. withdrawal of the soldiers to their barrack
3. inquiry into the mass killing
4. transfer of power to the elected representatives

In addition to that, several more demands were voiced in the speech of Bangabandhu. He declared the closure of all the courts, offices and educational institutions for an indefinite period of time. The gathering was strictly monitored by the military administration. It was assumed that the declaration of



Picture : The Historic speech of 7 March, 1971 by Bangabandhu

independence by Bangabandhu might result in massive destructions. Therefore, a direct declaration of independence was tacitly left out and it was declared indirectly. In that declaration of independence Bangabandhu said, "I ask my people to set up struggle committees under the leadership of Awami League in every neighborhood and union to carry out our struggle. You must prepare yourselves with what little you have. Keep it in mind, since we have given blood, we will give more of it, we will free the people of this land, inshallah. The struggle this time is for our emancipation. The struggle this time is for our independence." He also gave directives to all to get prepared for the struggle of independence and urged them to commit the greatest sacrifice to liberate the country from its enemies. This speech of him was aired from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro as, "Thunder voice" which inspired the Banglaeas to get engaged in the freedom struggle.

Massive movements started countrywide from the next day of the speech of Bangabandhu on 7 March. The schools and colleges, offices, courts, mills and factories closed down following his directives. The agitated mass started to resist the members of Pakistan army in various places. The realization of taxes and excises was brought to a halt. Under this circumstance, Yahya Khan appointed Tikka Khan as the governor of East Pakistan. The government issued an military order and asked all officers and employees to join their workplaces. Despite that the people of East Pakistan from all walks of life continued the non cooperation movement. The government imposed martial law once again on 13 March. On

14 March Zulfiker Ali Bhutto, a leader of West Pakistan, suggested an unrealistic formula to hand over power to the majority parties in East and West Pakistan. However, without paying heed to these, Bangabandhu introduced the 35 points based demand on that very day. That included various directives for the mass people to continue the movements.

After the release of the decree of Bangabandhu, Awami League took control of every sector except the army. Comprehending the seriousness of the situation Yahya Khan came to visit Dhaka on 15 March. There he suggested holding a discussion with Bangabandhu on the political crisis. Bangabandhu agreed to take part in the discussion but did not withdraw the non cooperation movement. The Yahya-Mujib talk commenced from 16 March. Then Zulfiker Ali Bhutto came to Dhaka abruptly and joined the discussion. Meanwhile, Pakistani Army fired at some innocent people at Jaidevpur and that incident had its effects on Mujib-Yahya talks. In fact, the discussion ended up with no results. On 23 March, the Resolution Day of Pakistan, the flag of independent Bangladesh was hoisted in the houses of this country instead of the flag of Pakistan. On 24 March the leaders of Pakistan tried for the last time to negotiate the conflict. But Yahya Khan departed Dhaka on the sly leaving the discussion unfinished. Before that he gave directives to the military force to launch attacks on the unarmed Bangalees. As a result, on the fateful night of 25 March, deadly attacks were unleashed on Bangalees. The Pakistani army ruthlessly killed many Bangalees on that night.

### **The war of liberation and the independence of 1971**

People from all walks of life got united to respond to the urge and measures proclaimed by Bangabandhu on 7 March. All offices, courts, educational institutions, mills and factories got shut down. Finding the situation in East Pakistan out of control Yahya Khan came to Dhaka to had talks with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. At that time Bhutto also visited Dhaka. On the other hand, Yahya was wasting time in the pretext of discussions and brought the soldiers and ammunition from West Pakistan with a view to activate military attacks on East Bengal. On 17 March Tikka Khan and Rao Forman Ali designed the blue print of the ruthless killing of Bangalees known as "Operation Searchlight." The most brutal genocide in the history of the world occurred on 25 March. The operation launched attacks on different vital spots including police camp, Pilkhana BDR camp, and Dhaka University and committed the cruelest killing, which is known as the "Black Night of 25 March" in history. The Pakistan army arrested Bangabandhu on the early hour of 26 March (after 12-00 am on 25 March) and took him to West Pakistan from Dhaka.



Picture : The genocide of 25th March, 1971

### **The genocide of 25th March**

A disgraceful chapter opened up in the history of Bangalees as well as the world at the midnight of 25 March. At that time, the Pakistan army attacked the unarmed, innocent, freedom loving, common people of East Pakistan and committed random acts of assassination. Pakistan named that mission "Operation Searchlight". Though that operation was launched on 25 March, they had planned the attack in the beginning of March. On the one hand, negotiation meetings with Bangabandhu started since 16 March, on the other hand, Genearl Tikka Khan, Mej. Gen. Khadem Hossain and Rao Forman Ali were finalizing the Operation Searchlight. The disarmification of the Bangalee soldiers of East Bengal Regiment started from 19 March in East Bengal. This caused clashes in Jaidevpur. On 20 March as the government issued an order to surrender weapons. On that very day, the military preparation in Dhaka cantonment was given a complete shape by General Yahya Khan, his military advisor Hamid Khan, Tikka Khan, General Peerjada, General Omor Faruk and others. During that time six to seventeen PIA flight Boeings 707 aeroplanes flew to Dhaka carrying soldiers and provisions and ships were anchored in Chittagong port which were loaded with numerous soldiers and weapons. The unloading of weapons and foodstuff from MV Sowat started on 24 March at Chittagong port. When all preparations were made, the date of 25 March was chosen for launching the genocide. Major General Rao Farman Ali was assigned with the main charge of Dhaka city.

Attacks on Dhaka University dormitories started at dead of night. Acts of killing and brutal assaults continued in Jahurul Hoque Hall, Jagannath Hall and Rokeya Hall. Mass killing was taking place in the same fashion in old Dhaka, Kachu khet, Tejgaon, Indira Road, Mirpur, Mohammadpur, inside Dhaka airport, Rayer bazaar, Ganaktuli, Dhanmondi, Kalabagan, Kanthalbagan and other places. Genocide also started in other places of the country.

Following the commencement of genocide in Dhaka Bangabandhu declared independence and broadcasted it via wireless. Immediately after hearing the proclamation announced by Bangabandhu, resistance was posed in different districts of Bangladesh including Chittagong. That was the beginning of an uneven war between Pakistani army and Bangalee police, anser and common people which is known as the great war of independence in history.

### **Declaration of independence**

Bangabandhu proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh before being arrested on the first hour of 26 March (25 March after 12-00 am). This is why our Independence Day is observed on 26 March. The declaration of independence was made in English so that the people across the world could understand that. The declaration was given below:

"This may be my last message. From today, Bangladesh is independent. I call upon the people of Bangladesh wherever you might be and with whatever you have, to resist the army of occupation to the last. Your fight must go on until the last soldier of the Pakistan occupation army is expelled from the soil of Bangladesh and final victory is achieved."

This declaration of independence was transmitted to everywhere in Bangladesh via the transmitter of the then EPR, telegram and teleprinter. The declaration of independence by

Bangabandhu was broadcast at the noon of 26 March once from Chittagong Betar Kendro (Radio Centre, Kalurghat) and then again from Kalurghat Betar kendro by M A Hannan, a leader of Awami League in Chittagong. The freedom loving people of Bangladesh got motivated by the news of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's declaration of independence and it earned immediate support and participation from Bangalee military, para-military and civil forces

### **Formation of the Bangladesh Government (Mujibnagar Government)**

As the Pakistan military force started genocide on 25 March of 1971, the people of East Pakistan posed resistance against them initially without any preparation and organizational movement. In order to administer the liberation war efficiently the first provisional government of Bangladesh was formed on 10 April. The formal swearing in ceremony was held on 17 April at Vaidynathtala in Meherpur district. A large number of local and foreign journalists and other dignitaries was attended in this ceremony. This government was headed by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The village Vaidynathtala was named Mujibnagar after his name and the provisional government also came to be popularly termed as Mujibnagar government. However, the aircraft of Pakistan Air Force bombed at Mujibnagar and took control of it just after two hours of formation of this government. Hence, the headquarters of Mujibnagar government was shifted to 8 Theatre Road in Kolkata.



Picture : The oath of Bangladesh Government (Mujibnagar Government)

### **The Mujibnagar Government**

President	:	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
Vice President	:	Syed Nazrul Islam (the Acting President, in absence of Bangabandhu, who was in charge of the commander in chief of the armed forces and Muktibahini)
Prime Minister	:	Tajuddin Ahmed
Finance Minister	:	M. Masur Ali
Home, Agriculture, relief and Rehabilitation Minister	:	A. H. M. Kamruzzaman
Foreign, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister	:	Khondokar Moshtaq Ahmed
Commander in Chief	:	Colonel (Rtd.) M. A. G. Osmani
Chief of Staff	:	Lt. Colonel (Rtd.) Abdur Rob
Deputy Chief of Staff	:	Group Captain A. K. Khondokar

There were 12 portfolios or divisions of the provisional Government of Bangladesh. During the war all civil and military administration was run by these divisions.

### **Bangladesh Detained**

The Pakistan military force engaged in a feast of assault, murder and destructions all over Bangladesh from 26 March to 16 December. The main target of the mass killing

venture that started in Dhaka with the codename, "Operation Searchlight" were the students of this country including the students of Dhaka University, the educated middle class, who used to believe in secular politics and the minority Hindus. Because, the Pakistani rulers would believe that the Hindus had certain roles in instigating movements and struggle in East Pakistan and these had all been patronized by India.

Though Pakistan army was scheduled to start their operation at the 'zero hour' of 25 March, the army left cantonment at about half past eleven at night for pre-determined destinations. The Pakistani force started widespread operation all over the country including Dhaka. They targeted their attacks in the Jahurul Hoque Hall, Salimullah Muslim Hall, Jagannath Hall and in the residential buildings of many teachers and killed many of them. They attacked with tanks, cannons and machineguns in different areas of Dhaka including Rajarbag Police line and the EPR (East Pakistan Rifles) at present BGB (Border Guards of Bangladesh) headquarters at Pilkhana. Thus, the most atrocious genocide in the history began. Being inspired by the March 7 speech of Bangabandhu, people made attempts to put barricades on the streets of Dhaka. The EPR and police force showed resistance with boundless bravery. But the Pakistani army equipped with modern weaponry made their way into that resistance with ease.

It can be assumed from the malicious mass killing, assaults and the demolition inflicted on the Hindu community living at Nawabpur, Tantibazar and Sakharibazar areas in Dhaka that Pakistani rulers had a more hostile attitude towards them. In the eye of West Pakistani rulers, Hindus were synonymous to Awami League supporters and they were considered as threats to the unity of the 'divine' Pakistan. It was also thought that they were backed and patronized by India. The acts of mass destruction and molestation of women out of such blind convictions revealed the extreme anti-Hindu feelings, animosity and dreadful detestation of the Pakistan army. Due to the abrupt nature of the attack, the innocent and helpless city dwellers had no measures to defend themselves.

Dhaka University became the target of the wrath of the Pakistan Army due to its anti-government movements. Hundreds of students were slaughtered along with professor Gobinda Chandra Dev and Dr. Muniruzzaman. Dr. Jyotirmoy Guha Thakurda suffered bullet injury and died after two days in Dhaka Medical College. The situation in old Dhaka, especially, in Hindu dwelling areas of Sakharibazar, Tantibazar was disastrous. The residents of Dhaka could not think, even in their dreams, of the barbarous, brutal and mischievous bluster that was awaiting them. The city of Dhaka turned in to a dome of the dead. One could hear only the lament and cry of the distressed human race.

Pakistan army did not confine themselves within Dhaka city, but spread out to the far off villages. The intrusive Pakistan force and their collaborators killed 30 lakhs Bangalees and more than two and half lakhs of mothers and sisters became fell to their cruel lust. In order to make this country intellectually barren in a planned way, the Pak army cruelly annihilated the eminent writers, artists, poets, journalists, physicians and engineers.

The Rajakars, Al Badr, Al-Shams and Peace Committee lent their hands to Pakistan army in their act of molestation, execution, setting fire, looting etc. Those people of

known as anti liberation force. Mainly the supporters of Jamaete Islami, Muslim League, Nezame Islami, East Pakistan Council Muslim League, etc. were active against the war of liberation. These parties also took part and assisted in anti-human crimes.

### **The activities of the anti war force**

The Rajakar (Rejakar) was the voluntary force organised by the Pakistani government. In June, 1971 Lieutenant General Tikka Khan promulgated the 'East Pakistan Rajakar ordinance'. At the beginning this force was composed of the Ansars and Mujahids. Later many pro Pakistani people joined that force. General Newazi played important roles in establishing this force. The Rajakars were trained for one week. They were trained by Pakistan army. They fought against the liberation fighters as the associates of Pakistani force. Besides Rajakar force, there was another ferocious force called Al-Badr. The Al-Badr force was composed of the members of Islami Chatro Sangho, the students wing of Jamaet-e-Islami. The Al-Shams force was formed with the leaders and activists of other Pro Islami students' organizations. The Al-Badr force was assigned with the main task of executing the Bangalee intelligentsia. Therefore, this force was very fearful and atrocious in nature. The current Amir of Jamat-e-Islami, Motiur Rahman Nizami was the chief of Al-Badr force. The organization that came into being with a view to counter the liberation war was the 'Peace Committee'. Peace Committee was formed all over the country including Dhaka, the capital city. Having the Governor General of Pakistan Tikka Khan as its patron, the peace committee got expanded with the support and participation different parties such as Jamat-e-Islami, Council Muslim League, Jamat Olama-e-Islam, Muslim League, etc. This organization acted as the most loyal subordinate for the tortures, atrocities, and genocides committed by the occupant force. The 'Dhaka Nagarik Peace Committee' was formed with Khaza Khoeruddin, the president of Council Muslim League as the convener. Leaders of Jamat-e-Islami Golam azam, Moulavi Farid Ahammad, A.S.M. Soliman and so on were in this committee.

The Pakistan army wanted to destroy all the resources and institutions of Bangladesh as per the, 'scorch earth policy'. For this reason educational institutes, shop and stores, houses and building, hospitals, mosques, temples nothing was let off their attack. Their goal was to take control of this land by murdering the people of this territory. Some local collaborators assisted the Pakistanis to carry on such anti-human offenses.

### **Administration under the Mujibnagar government and the war**

The Mujibnagar government was composed of the winners of the 1970-71 elections to the National Assembly and Provincial Assembly. The main objectives of that government were to lead the war of liberation and earn worldwide support in favour of Bangladesh.

The government ran its administration by the Bangalee officers. It had 12 ministries or divisions. These were, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Trades and Commerce, Cabinet Division, General Administration, Health and Welfare Division, Relief and Rehabilitation Division, Engineering Division, Planning Commission, Control board for the Youth and Reception camp etc. Mujibnagar Government established missions of Bangladesh government in the important cities (Kolkata, Delhi, London, Washington, New York, Stockholm) of different countries of the world. These mission tried to run campaigns in favour of Bangladesh and earn support for



the government of Bangladesh. The government appointed Justice Aby Sayeed Chowdhury the special envoy. He devoted his service to win the support of world leaders and people's mandate in favour of the liberation war. After the founding of Mujibnagar government on 10 April, initiative was taken to form a freedom fighter force including military, civil and mass people to carry out the struggle for independence. On 10 April, the government divided Bangladesh into four military zones and appointed four Sector-commanders. This was re-structured on 11 April by creating 11 sectors. Moreover, a number of sub sectors and three Brigade Forces were put up. The Bangalee military officers and soldiers working in Pakistan Army, police, EPR, members of Navy and Air Force joined these forces. Every force consisted of military, guerrilla and ordinary fighters. They were known as Freedom fighters or Muktifouz. People from various professions including students, youths, women, farmers, activists and supporters of political parties, workers joined these forces. Those fighters, after having training in different training camps, entered the country and attacked various military camps or shelters. Besides the various forces under the government, a number of forces emerged spontaneously within the country. Those organizations made valuable contribution in their battles against the Pakistani and Razakar forces locally. For example, the Kaderia Bahini of Tangail is worth mentioning. The freedom fighters, under the leadership of Mujibnagar government, fought battles in order to free the country from the grasp of Pakistanis, many of them laid down their lives and many were injured.

### **Liberation war and different organizations**

The great war of liberation is the outcome of long political movements and struggles. It is likely that difference of opinions among the political parties regarding the liberation war is evident. Though the majority of the leftist political parties were in favour of the liberation war, a certain faction was against it. On the other hand, the Islamic political parties having faiths in Pakistani ideology not only opposed the war of liberation but also helped the Pakistani forces in violence, torture and genocide and directly participated in such acts. Awami League is the party that led the war of liberation. The first Bangladesh government



Picture : Meeting of the advisory committee of Bangladesh Government at Mujibnagar during Liberation War

that was formed with Bangabandhu as the president and Tajuddin Ahmed as the Prime Minister lead the war of liberation with much efficiency, skill and foresightedness. In the first week of September, 1971, Awami League formed with the like minded leftist parties.

Members included in that committee were: Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani (NAP-Bhasani), Moni Singh (Bangladesh Communist Party), Monoronjon Dhor (Bangladesh National Congress), Professor Muzaffar Ahmed (NAP-Muzaffar) and from Awami League Tajuddin Ahmed, the Prime Minister and Khondokar Moshtaq Ahmed, the Foreign Minister. However, Purba Pakistan Communist Party under the leadership of Mohammad Toaha known as a pro-Pieking politician and the Purba Baglar Communist Party (Motin-Alauddin) were against the liberation war.

The torture, aggression and massacre done by the Pak army and their local collaborators made the people of this country more united. People from different walks of life such as students, farmers, workers, women, teachers, poet, journalists, physicals and artists joined the struggle for freedom.

### **Students**

Among the freedom fighters, students were highest in number. The students were the forerunners in demonstrating initial resistance against the Pakistani force at different areas of the country. Even the school going adolescents took part in the war of liberation along with the college and university students. They crossed the border to get war training. Government of Bangladesh which was in charge of leading the war of liberation provided the arms and training for the students and youths. In most cases, equipped with only three weeks of training and light weapons, the freedom fighters chased the enemies stirred by unlimited courage, motivation and patriotic feelings.

### **Farmers**

The farmers had glorious contributions to the war of liberation. They were ready to make any sacrifice in order to achieve freedom. They acted as dedicated individuals in each attack towards the enemies. They were not concerned with personal gain or loss. They had just one goal; that was to achieve freedom at any cost.

### **Women**

The women played a glorious role in the liberation war. Women, especially the female students participated spontaneously in the Sangram Parishad that was formed in the very beginning of March, 1971 in each region. Women had valuable contributions along with the males in liberating the country. During the nine months of war lakhs of mothers and sisters fell victim to the torture of Pak army. Bangabandhu, with the affection of a daughter, have addressed them as 'Birangana'. In addition to that a huge number of women helped the freedom fighters in many ways by providing shelters, food, nursing and hiding weapons even at the risks of their own lives. Even the instances of women taking part in direct battles are not less in number. Two women have been awarded the title 'Bir Protik' in recognition of their gallantry in the liberation war. One of them is Taramon Bibi and the other one is Dr. Sitara Begum. Many more women freedom fighters faced the Pakistani forces in the battle fields all over the country.



Picture : Women in Liberation War

**Mass media**

The role of mass media in the liberation war of Bangladesh is boundless. Newspapers and Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro played the leading role in this respect. The artists and cultural activists of Chittagong Betar introduced the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro on 26 March. Later it was run under the supervision of Mujibnagar Government. Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro inspired common people to take part in the war by broadcasting news bulletins, patriotic songs, heroic tales of the freedom fighters, various incidents of battle field etc. Thus it paved the way of victory by encouraging the freedom fighters. Besides these, the newspaper published under the management of the transmission cell of the Mujibnagar government.

**Expatriate Bangalee**

The expatriate Bangalees extended their helping hands to the liberation war in various ways. In different countries they collected fund for the liberation war. They rushed to the members of parliament to earn support for Bangladesh, sent delegates to various international organizations, appealed to the government not to supply Pakistan with arms and ammunition. In these respect, the role of the expatriate Bangalees in Britain needs special mentioning. They worked in order to create public opinion in favour of the liberation war.

**Artists-writers-intellectuals**

The main driving force behind the liberation war was the mass people. However, the contributions of artists, writers, intellectuals and different cultural activists in motivating people during war were much commendable. They helped the freedom fighters in various ways even at the risks of their own lives. The write ups in newspapers, the news bulletins of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro, patriotic songs, liberation war based songs, recitation of poems, plays and talks on the theme of liberation war, the very popular 'Chorompotro' programme of M. R. Akter Mukul and 'Jallader Darbar' etc. helped the liberation war march ahead. These helped the freedom fighters sustain emotional and moral strengths in the battle fields, provided courage and ignited indomitable spirits among people against their rivals. The Pakistani force exterminated countless gifted personalities including composer Altaf Mahmood, Journalists Sirajuddin Hossain, Selina Parvin, Physician Dr. Fazle Rabbi, teacher of Dhaka University Gias Uddin Ahmed and so on. This country became free from the enemies paying the price of those lives.

**Mass people**

It was possible to achieve independence by the Banglalees in just nine months due to the help and cooperation of the common people and their sincere craving for independence. Everyone, except some few collaborators of Pakistani invading force, took part in the liberation war in some way or other. The common people gave the freedom fighters shelters, helped them with information on the positions and movements of their opponents, supplied with food and medicine, did nursing and gave information. People from small tribal groups also took part in the liberation war of Bangladesh alongside common people. Many of them became martyr in the liberation war. The number of common people dominates among the thirty lakh martyrs of our liberation war. Our independent map, the red and green flag have been achieved in exchange of their blood.

### **Contributions of political figures in achieving independence**

The contribution of the political figures in achieving the independence of Bangladesh is never-ending. The political leaders of different parties sacrificed a lot for accomplishing of the independence of Bangladesh. They put up with much humiliation and torture. The politicians continued their political movements from the beginning of the struggle for independence with their life at risk.

#### **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the main leader of the struggle for independence of Bangladesh. Throughout his life, his activities, movements and struggles were all deliberated to the cause of the freedom of Bangalee as a nation. With this view in mind, he took the initiatives of founding Students League in 1948 and Awami League in 1949. He played a crucial role in the language movements of 1948 and 1952. He was among



Pic : Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

the first group of people who were imprisoned following the language movement. His voice was always loud, be it in the parliament or in the street, in defense of Bangla language and culture. The Father of the Nation Bangabandhu played invincible roles in the election of united front in 1954, the recognition of Bangla as the state language by the constitution in 1956, the movement against the military rules of Ayub Khan in 1958, placing of the 'six points demand for our sustenance' the six points programme and the six points based movement in 1966, the mass uprising of 1969, the unprecedented win of Awami League in the general election of 1970 and the proclamation of independence from the non cooperation movement and achievement of independence in 1971.

He spent 12 years in prison out of the 24 years of the Pakistan regime. When, on 25 March the Pakistani occupying force launched crackdown on the innocent Bangalees, he proclaimed independence candidly on the early hour of 26 March (after 12-am of 25 June). Following the course of struggle, he called for the liberation war in his momentous speech on 7 March. It was in his name that our war of liberation was carried out. He was the Commander in Chief of the war of liberation and the president of the Mujibnagar government. We have got our independence owing to his sturdy and uncompromising leadership. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the great leader of our freedom and the architect of independent Bangladesh.

#### **Tajuddin Ahmad**

Tajuddin Ahmad was the general secretary of Awami League during the war of liberation. He was a loyal and close companion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. This great leader shouldered the responsibility of Prime Minister of the Mujibnagar government (April 10, 1971) which was formed to lead the liberation war. He announced the formation of Mujibnagar government through a radio speech on 11 April, 1971. In absence of Bangabandhu, he lead the liberation war



Pic : Tajuddin Ahmad

successfully. He was the convener of the committee formed to carry out the liberation war. His name is closely related with the history of the liberation war in Bangladesh.

### **Sayed Nazrul Islam**

Syed Nazrul Islam was one of the prime leaders of Awami League. He was the Vice President of the Mujibnagar Government during the liberation war. Syed Nazrul Islam took on the charge of Acting President in absence of Bangabandhu. In 1971, he urged all concerned to make the liberation war vigorous and successful. Syed Nazrul Islam was one of the organizers and directors of liberation war.



Pic : Syed Nazrul Islam

### **Captain M. Mansur Ali**

Captain M. Mansur Ali was a prime leader of Awami League and a close aide of Bangabandhu. He was the Finance Minister of the Mujibnagar government during liberation war. He was in charge of ensuring funds needed for food, clothes, arms and training during liberation war. He carried out that responsibility successfully.



Pic : Captain M. Mansur Ali

### **A. H. M. Kamruzzaman**

A. H. M. Kamruzzaman is another top ranked leader of Awami League. He was the Minister for Home, Relief and Rehabilitation of the government during liberation war. At that time he carried out important tasks of collecting reliefs for the lakhs of people taking refuge in India, distribution of reliefs in relief camps and later on arranging rehabilitation for the refugees. His had endless contributions to the liberating war and achievement of independence of Bangladesh.



Pic : A. H. M. Kamruzzaman

### **Other leaders**

Among other leaders the role of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani in achieving the independence is worth mentioning. He played significant role in the movement demanding for acquittal of Bangabandhu of the historic Agartola Case (1968-69), and in the mass uprising of 1969. Stay in India during the liberation war, he urged different nations to extend their supports for and stand beside Bangladesh. Besides him, Professor Mozaffar Ahmed (NAP-Mozaffar) and Comrade Moni Singh of Communist Party played important roles in the liberation war. These three leaders were members of the committee that was formed to lead the war of liberation efficiently.



Pic : Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani

### **The people's mandate across the globe and roles of different countries in the liberation war**

The heinous horror caused by the occupying Pakistani armed forces in 1971 stirred the world conscience. The world mandate came around to protest the acts of

ransacking, burning, rapes and extermination committed by Pakistan forces and their anti-liberation native collaborators. Different countries condemned and protested and conveyed support to the liberation war. The world voice became louder to protest the acts of the dark night of 25 March and the brutal atrocities afterwards. People from all over the world conferred their supports to the liberation war of Bangladesh.

### **Role of India**

India, the neighboring country, gave support to the liberation war of Bangladesh directly. India effectively exposed to the people around the world the brutal massacre on the dark night of 25 March, 1971, and the heinous genocides, ransacking and destructions committed by the Pakistani occupying forces throughout the next nine months. The name of the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is closely associated with the history of the independence of Bangladesh. Through her enduring efforts and initiatives, she was the first to draw the attention of the international community to the liberation war of Bangladesh.

The people and government of India helped nearly one crore of refugees by providing them with shelter, food, clothes and medical treatments and gave arms and training to the freedom fighters. Towards the end of the liberation war of Bangladesh, on 3 December, 1971, Pakistan launched air attacks on India. In the backdrop of Pakistan's attack the governments of Bangladesh and India formed the joint-command consisting of Mukti bahini and Indian army. India gave recognition to Bangladesh as an Independent state on 6 December, 1971. Many Indian soldiers laid down their lives in the liberation war of Bangladesh.

**Role of Soviet Union and the Communist States :**After India, the highest contributions to the liberation war of Bangladesh were made by the recently mislaid Soviet Union (Now, Russia). The Soviet Head of the State urged the Pakistan Presidents Yahya Khan to put an end to the genocide, blazing and molestation of women in Bangladesh by Pakistan forces. He also asked Yahya Khan to transfer power to the elected representatives of Bangladesh. The Soviet newspapers and media helped create the global mandate by publishing stories on the oppressive acts of Pakistan forces in Bangladesh and the advancements of the liberation war. Soviet Union exercised veto (to oppose) to discard the proposal of putting an end to the war which was put forwarded by the United States in favour of Pakistan. The socialist countries of that time such as, Cuba, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany etc. supported the liberations war of Bangladesh.

**The role of Great Britain :** Starting from the post-election period of 1970 to the days of liberation war in 1971, the media of Britain, especially, BBC and the newspapers published from London, made the people of the world aware of the brutal oppressions of Pakistani occupying force, resistance, the struggles of Bangalis, the miserable conditions of the refugees sheltered in the India, the genocide of Pakistan forces and the developments of liberation war. The British was also very compassionate towards our liberation war. It may be mentioned that London was the main centre abroad for the campaigning of liberation war. Moreover, the London born noted singer George Harrison performed songs on the acts against humanity that was going on in the liberation war of Bangladesh in New York in the United States in front of a crowd of 40,000 to create awareness in favour of the liberation war and to run acts of fund raising war. Except

Britain, the media of Australia, West Germany, France, Italy, Japan and Canada helped formation of world mandate against the Pakistan forces. Iraq supported the cause of the liberation war of Bangladesh. The people of the United States, media and many congressmen were loud in favour of the liberation war of this country. But some of the countries of the world were against the liberation war of Bangladesh.

**The role of the United Nations :** The main aim and objective of the United Nations is to protect world peace and security. When Yahya Khan was busy annihilating the Banglaeese instead of handing over power to the elected public representatives, the United Nations played the role of almost a silent observer. The United Nations could not take any steps against the heinous atrocities and violation of fundamental human rights. In fact, the United Nations had limited strength in taking any measures on its own avoiding the five big and powerful nations having veto power.

### **The birth of Independent Bangladesh:**

India contributed and helped us a lot from the beginning of the liberation war. Particularly 21 november ,1971 ,the formation of the " allied forces" combining the Mukti Bahini and Indian Forces was a very significant event. The war intensified after Pakistan attacked India on December 03. Indian army, air force and navy also participated in the war along with the liberation force of Bangladesh from December 6 to 16.



Pic : Surrender of the Pakistan Army

As a result of a strong planned attack the occupying Pakistani force was defeated morally before the formal surrender. At last the commander of the Eastern Commands of Pakistani Army Lieutenant General Ameer Abdullah Khan Niazi surrendered along with 93 thousand Pakistani soldiers to Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora, the commander of the Eastern Commands of Indian Army at twenty one minutes past four in the afternoon of December 16, 1971. Group Captain A. R. Khondakar represented the Bangladesh Government. The achievement of this momentous independence came as a result of three millions of martyrs, limitless sufferings of lakhs of women, torture and sacrifice of the Bangalees. The independent, sovereign state-people's republic of Bangladesh has taken its proud position in the world at last.

### **The birth of Independent Bangladesh:**

The liberation war of Bangladesh is a very significant account in the history of the world. Bangladesh was the first country in the third world which achieved independence through an armed struggle. The people of the East Bengal were the victims of all sorts of torture, exploitation, disparity, ethnic violence by the Pakistani rulers since 1947. But the struggling humanity of this region resisted these immoral activities. These immoral activities ended through the achievement of victory on December 16, 1971. The call for independence by the main leader of the independence struggle of Bangladesh Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman called for the independence of Bangladesh on March 7, 1971 declared the independence of Bangladesh which became a reality on December 16, 1971. Common people of Bangladesh extended all out cooperation for the

freedom fighters. Thus the liberation war became the symbol of the expression of a strong Bangalee nationalism. People involve themselves in the reconstruction of and building a prosperous Bangladesh from the spirit of patriotism grew during the liberation war among the Bangalees and other ethnic groups living in this region. Thousand years dream of Bangalees became successful through this independence. The Liberation war of Bangladesh inspire the exploited and independence aspiring humanity of the world.

### **The history of the Name of Bangladesh**

We know, the name of our country is Bangladesh. But constitutionally its name is the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh. This name also has a history. Nevertheless the relation between the name of a country and its geographical boundary is very important. And this boundary changed many times.

In the old days Bangladesh was divided in various localities. That has been discussed in the initial section of this book. In Mahavarata and in the writings of historian Ptolemy there is the reference of Bangla. Much later in 1342 Shamsuddin Ilias Shah established the independent Bangla for the first time uniting three centers of Bengal like Lakhnauti or Loxmanaboti (Gour), Satgaon (Rarh) and Sonargaon (Bangala). This independence existed for 200 years. The titles of Ilias Shah were "Shah-E Bangla", "Shah-E Bangalian", " Sultan-E- Bangala". And from that time the whole Bengal region came to be known as "Bangalah". Its capital was Sonargaon. Bengal got the identity of "Subah Bangla" during the era of the Mughal empire when Akbar was the Emperor. But the Europeans, particularly the Portuguese named this region Bengala. But the English called it Bengal.

During the rule of the East India company a separate province was made with the name Bengal. Bihar, Oddissa, and Choto Nagpur were the parts of Bengal. Later in 1905 another new province was formed with the name "East Bengal and Assam" with the East Bengal and Assam of India. In the context of movements the proposal for the division of Bengal was nullified by the English government after six years. After the end of the British rule in 1947 the West Bengal was included in India and the east Bengal was included in Pakistan. Even in the Pakistan days today's Bangladesh was known as Purba Banga or the East Bengal till 1956. When the Pakistani government renamed Purba Banga or the East Bengal to East Pakistan Bangabandhu protested it. Bangabandhu said, "The name Bangla has a long history and tradition. So the attitude of the people of this region should be taken by a referendum before changing its name". Bangladesh found its position in the world map after a sanguinary great liberation war in 1971.

### **History Of the National Flag**

The national flag of Bangladesh is the symbol of our pride and dignity. Photo The first national flag of Bangladesh People of this country achieved this flag through the sacrifice of an ocean of blood and a lot of sacrifice. Green in the rectangle is the symbol of the green nature of Bangladesh and red stands for the red colour of the blood sacrificed by the martyrs in the liberation war.



Pic : The National Flag



But in the flag used during the liberation war in 1971 had a map of Bangladesh. By the flag with a map of Bangladesh the world was informed in which geographical area there will be established an independent Bangladesh. The flag with a map of Bangladesh made us organized, assembled and united. Shivnarayan Das designed the first map of Bangladesh. He was the secretary of Comilla district Chatra League in that time. Chatra Sangram Parishad

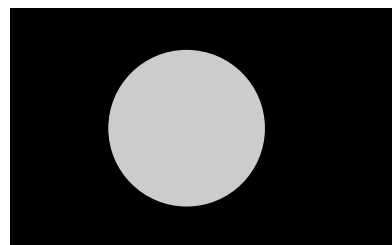


Photo The present national flag of Bangladesh

or the students' struggle movement formed by the then influential students' leaders gave Shivnarayan Das the responsibility of making the national flag. The flag was made very confidentially in room number 118 of Jahurul Haque Hall in Dhaka University in the midnight of June 06, 1970. When the whole country was turbulent in the burning March 2 in 1971, students' leader A S M Abdur Rab whistled the flag of Bangladesh designed by Shivnarayan Das at the west gate of Arts Building of Dhaka University. It was like refusing Pakistan state before the formal declaration of independence of Bangladesh. In the mean time non-cooperation movement had already started at the call of Bangabandhu.

An unpredictable thing happened on March 23 which was also the Republican day of Pakistan. National flag of Pakistan was burned in different towns including Dhaka. Bangladeshi national flag was whistled on many buildings. The refused flag of Pakistan could return no more. Three million martyrs sacrificed their lives to save the dignity of the national flag. After the independence Bangabandhu gave artist Kamrul Hasan to finalise the design of the national flag. Our national flag got the present design in the hands of artist Kamrul Hasan.

National flag is the symbol of a nations' hopes and desires. The dignity and honour of the country is integrated with the dignity and honour of its national flag. It is our sacred duty to defend the dignity of this flag as the citizens of Bangladesh.

**Individual Work:** Mark the reasons behind the comment-" National flag is the symbol of the sovereignty of Bangladesh.

### History Of National Anthem:

Amar shonar Bangla,/Ami tomae bhalobashi (My Bengal of Gold,/I love you.) is our national anthem. In 1905 the British government tried to divide Bengal for creating a new province " The East Bengal and Assam. In its consequence Rabindranath Tagore composed this poem. In the first two decades of the twentieth century this song was very much popular during the time of Swadeshi movement. The opponents of the Separation of Bengal or Bongovongo (1905) like the politicians, Swadeshi activists and revolutionaries made a publicity of the song as a means to excite the Bengalis with the feeling of



Pic : Rabindranath Tagore

patriotism. But in the second decade of the twentieth century this song lost its appeal when the strong nationalist sentiment became weak. The song got a rebirth during the liberation war in 1971. The song was sung in a public meeting in Dhaka on January 03, 1971 and again in another public meeting organized by Chatra (Students) League and Sramik (Labourers) League on March 03, 1971. The song was sung in the Race Course Ground (Presently Suhrawardi Uddayan) before the historical seventh March speech made by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Exiled Mujibnagar government recognized the song as the national anthem and it was regularly broadcast from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (Independent Bangladesh Radio). After the liberation the song 'Amar Sonar Bangla' was declared as national anthem of Peoples Republic of Bangladesh by the constitution (article 4.1). It was suggested by the constitution that the first ten lines of the song should be sung vocally and the first four lines should be played on instruments.

### **The National Anthem of Bangladesh:**

#### **Amar Shonar Bangla**

Amar shonar Bangla,  
Ami tomæ bhalobashi.

Chirodin tomar akash, Tomar batash,  
Amar prane bajæ bashi.

O ma, Phagune tor amer bone  
Ghrane pagol kare,  
Mori hæ, hæ re,  
O ma, Oghrane tor bhôra khete  
Ami ki dekhechhi modhur hashi.

Ki shobha, ki chhaea go,  
Ki sneho, ki maea go,  
Ki achol bichhaeechho  
Boter mule,  
Nodir kule kule!

Ma, tor mukher bani  
Amar kane lage,  
Shudhar moto,  
Mori hæ, hæ re,  
Ma, tor bodonkhani molin hole,  
Ami noeon jole bhashi.

#### **My beloved Bengal**

My Bengal of Gold,  
I love you.

Forever your skies,  
Your air set my heart in tune  
As if it were a flute.

In spring, O mother mine,  
The fragrance from your mango groves  
Makes me wild with joy,  
Ah, what a thrill!  
In autumn, O mother mine,  
In the full blossomed paddy fields  
I have seen spread all over sweet smiles.

Ah, what a beauty, what shades,  
What an affection, and what a tenderness!  
What a quilt have you spread  
At the feet of banyan trees  
And along the banks of rivers!

O mother mine, words from your lips  
Are like nectar to my ears.  
Ah, what a thrill!  
If sadness, O mother mine,  
Casts a gloom on your face,  
My eyes are filled with tears!

### **Formalities of Playing National Anthem:**

- a. Full national anthem will be sung in the special occasions like the Independence Day, the Victory Day and Martyrs Day.
- b. Full national anthem will be sung in the functions where the President/ the Prime Minister will be chief guest at the moments of their departure.
- c. Full national anthem will be sung during the Guard of Honour ceremony for a visiting Head of the State at the time of Saluting the Head of State. In such ceremonies the national anthem of the visitor's state will be sung first and the national anthem of Bangladesh will be sung afterwards. But only the first four lines will be sung if the guest is the Head of the Government, not the Head of the State.
- d. Only first four lines of the national anthem will be sung in foreign embassies in Bangladesh. In such a function the national anthem of Bangladesh will be sung first and the national anthem of the concerned state will be sung afterwards.
- e. The national anthem of Bangladesh will be played in other ceremonies or special ceremonies or in public meetings of the President, the Prime Minister or the diplomatic missions as per the rules.

### **National Monumental**

#### **National Mausoleum**

National Mausoleum was built in order to glorify the immortal memories of millions of martyrs in the war of liberation. It is situated in Savar in the 35 kilometers away from Dhaka in the north-west. Architect Moinul Islam designed this mausoleum. The pick of the mausoleum is one hundred fifty feet high with seven pairs of triangular walls rising step by step in order of small to big.



Photo : National Mausoleum

Various objects were used to increase the beauty and gravity of the mausoleum. In order to reach the main pulpit of it one has to dwell a long undulating way, pavement and a bridge upon an artificial lake. All these are indeed symbols of various movements and struggles of our liberation movement. There is a mass graveyard beside the place where lie many who sacrificed their valuable lives for our independence. Seven pairs of walls in the main mausoleum practically symbolize the proud struggles of Bengalis. These political events were 1952, 1954, 1956, 1962, 1966, 1969, 1971. Nevertheless the history of our struggle for independence exists in these seven important years. The Bengalis were successful to achieve independence from the chain of domination through the events happened between 1952 to 1971. The National Mausoleum again and again reminds us those great martyrs. The construction of the National Mausoleum started in 1972 and was completed in 1982 in three stages. The Mausoleum is the symbol of the pride, boast and dignity of Bangalees.

### **Oporajeo Bangla (Unconquerable Bengal)**

Oporajeo Bangla (Unconquerable Bengal) is the symbol of the protesting attitude of the Bangalees and the spirit of the freedom fighters. It was constructed in the Arts building premise in Dhaka University on a six feet high pulpit. The main sculpture is twelve feet high, eight feet wide and six feet in radius. The students community contributed a lot in all movements and struggles for democracy. Oporajeo Bangla (Unconquerable Bengal) was built in order to immortalize the proud sacrifice of the students in all struggles from the Language Movement of fifty two to the freedom war of seventy one. Freedom fighter and sculptor Khaled Abdullah made this sculpture. Its construction continued from 1973 to 1979. The structure of three young uncommonly brave freedom fighters has been reflected in this sculpture in a very skilled manner. Two young freedoms fighters stand for the determination to face the enemy and the young girl with a first-aid bag stands for the service rendered to the injured freedom fighters during the liberation wear. Oporajeo Bangla will ever remain as a source of inspiration for the students community of Bangladesh.



Photo : Oporajeo Bangla

### **Mujibnagar Smriti Soudh ( Mujibnagar Monumental)**

This monumental was built in Meherpur in Kustia District in order to honour the memory of the Mujibnagar Government which led the liberation war. In the monumental 24 triangular walls gradually becoming higher makes a highest height at the last. These 24 triangular walls make the symbol of twenty four years of exploitation of the colonial Pakistani rule. The people of this country gradually organized themselves in order to assert their rights since 1947. At a stage they freed their country by dint of strong attitude and determination. The first government in independent Bangladesh first took oath here. Its architect was Tanveer Karim.



Photo :Mujibnagar Government

### **Budhdhijibi Smriti Soudh (The Intellectuals Monumental)**

As a part of the conspiracy to make Bangalees merit less innumerable intellectuals were killed during the liberation war. The Rajakar and the Al-badr forces helped the Pakistan Army to kill these intellectuals brutally. Two days prior to the final defeat the Pakistan Army killed innumerable intellectuals on December 14. In order to immortalize their memory Budhdhijibi Smriti Soudh (The Intellectuals Monumental) was built in Mirpur in Dhaka city Its architect was Mustafa Ali Quddas . Its construction completed in 1972.



Photo : Budhdhijibi Smriti Soudh

**Shikha Chironton (Flame for Ever)**

Shikha Chironton (Flame for Ever) was built in the Suhrawardy Uddayan on March 26, 1997 to immortalize the memorable martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the Liberation war. Bangabandhu called for the "struggles for independence and freedom" from this place on March 07, 1971. The important thing is that the occupying Pakistan Army surrendered on December 16 in this Suhrawardy Uddayan after a nine months blood shed in the war. Shikha Chironton was founded to celebrate the silver jubilee of the independence of Bangladesh.



Photo : Shikha Chironton

**Rayer Bazar Bodhyo Bhoomi (Rayer Bazar Scaffold)**

At the time of Liberation war the Pakistan Army and their allies in Bangladesh killed millions of people. Mass graveyards and Scaffolds are scattered all over the country. In 1971 the Rayer Bazar area in Dhaka was very calm and quiet. There was not enough population there. The area covers some three kilometers from Kalu Shah Pukur Par to Goal Masjid. Rayer Bazar became a scaffold from the month of March. Not only people were killed here but also innumerable dead bodies were brought to this place. People living here did not dare to move around the concrete roads of this place. Rayer Bazar Bodhyo Bhoomi was discovered on December 18, 1971. A huge number of rotten and deformed dead bodies were from the wholes dug in the locality. The best sons of the country were killed here brutally. Among them the dead bodies of the professors, journalists, writers, physicians were majority in number. Razakars and Al-badrs played a major role in the killing of the intellectuals. Some of the dead bodies found became so much deformed that they could not be identified. Yet only a few number of dead bodies of the intellectuals like Professor Munir Chowdhury, Journalist Selina Chowdhury, Dr, Fazle Rabbi could be identified.



Photo : Rayer Bazar Bodhyo Bhoomi

**Exercise Questions****Multiple choice questions:**

1. How many seats did Awami League bag in the provincial election of East Pakistan in 1970?
  - a. 167
  - b. 198
  - c. 267
  - d. 298
2. "Independent Bangla Students Forum" (Swadhin Bangla Chatra Sangram Parishad) was organized-
  - i. For delaying to transfer power to the elected peoples representatives.
  - ii. For withholding the National Assembly session.
  - iii. For increasing admission fees in the university.

Which of the followings is correct?

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| a. i and ii   | b. i and iii      |
| c. ii and iii | d. I, ii, and iii |

**Read the stimulator and answer to the question nos. 3 and 4-**

State "B" extended its help with shelter, food, clothes and medical aid to the tortured and homeless people of the state "A" in their rational struggle for freedom from their rulers and focused their miseries to the world community.

3. Which of the states played the role of the stimulator like state "B" during the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971?
 

a. China	b. India
c. Nepal	d. Myanmar
4. For the help of the country-
  - i. Independence was hastened
  - ii. Human rights were defended
  - iii. The picture of the torture in Bangladesh was exposed to the external world.

Which of the followings is correct?

- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. i and ii   | b. i and iii     |
| c. ii and iii | d. i, ii and iii |

**Creative Questions:**

1. Abraham Lincoln, the pioneer of the modern democratic world is a memorable name in the history of democracy. His kindness, simplicity, wit, oratory and soft manners placed him on the seat of an ideal man in the world. He left an unparalleled mark in politics. In this way a struggling individual became the President of America. He freed the humanity from the capture of the cruelty of the selfish people. His historical speech for the people aspiring for democracy and freedom " Government of the people, by the people, for the people" has immortalized him even to day.
  - a. What was the name of the Prime Minister in the Mujibnagar Government?
  - b. What does " Operation Searchlight" mean?
  - c. In whose character the characteristics and activities of Abraham Lincoln as narrated above are reflected ?- Explain.
  - d. We achieved our independence for the strong and uncompromising leadership of that leader.-Explain.

## Chapter Thirteen

### The reign of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1972-1975)

March 26 is the Independence Day of Bangladesh. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared the Independence of Bangladesh on this day in 1971. After the declaration of independence, Pakistan army arrested Bangabandhu on the first hour of March 26 (after midnight 12, on March 25) in 1971 and took him to West Pakistan. He was a prisoner for nine months during the Liberation War. Pakistan government started his trial on the charge of treason at a military court. In a travesty of judgement, he was sentenced to be hanged. Bangabandhu was still a prisoner in a Pakistani jail even after the final victory on December 16, 1971. His countrymen even did not know whether he was alive. People all over the country were deeply anxious about Bangabandhu. There was eager waiting when would the great leader come back to his people. At last, Bangabandhu returned to his country on January 10, 1972. We will discuss the important events of Bangabandhu's reign.

**At the end of this chapter we will be able to -**

- describe the reconstruction activities of the war-torn country;
- explain the background of the developing of the constitution;
- describe the important events in Bangabandhu's reign;
- be respectful to the Father of the nation;
- be respectful to the constitution of the country.

#### **Bangabandhu's home coming**

Bangabandhu was flown direct to London by a special plane of Pakistani army before his return to homeland on January 10, 1972. After that, he came to Dhaka via Delhi by a British Royal Comet aircraft. At Dhaka, he was offered an unprecedented congratulation ceremony. He was drenched in love. He cried himself and made people cry. People's emotion-soaked cony gratulation to the undisputed leader was spontaneous. Millions of people gathered on the way from the old airport to the Race Course Maydan (at present Suhrawardy Uddayan) at Ramna just to have a glimpse of the popular leader.

At the Race Course Maydan, Bangabandhu gave a guideline in his speech on the emergency duties and the policy issues regarding a newly liberated country. He spoke in a clear voice on the reconstruction of the war-torn country, the recognition of Bangladesh as a new country by other countries of the world and on the characteristics of the state Bangladesh. He said, 'Bangladesh will be an ideal state and its foundation will not be on any particular religion. The foundation of the country will be democracy, socialism, Bangalee nationalism and secularism.'



Picture : Return to homeland on January 10, 1972 of Bangabandhu .

### **Parliamentary system of government**

The president of the government of Bangladesh formed at the beginning of the War of Liberation was Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. But at that time, no decision was made as to what the characteristics of the system of government of Bangladesh will be. The next day of homecoming, on January 11, 1972 Bangabandhu had a long discussion at the cabinet meeting and made the 'Temporary Constitution Ordinance' to introduce the parliamentary system of government in the country. On January 12, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was sworn in as the President by Chief Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem and instantly resigned to take over as the Prime Minister. Justice Abu Syed Choudhury was appointed President on the same day.

These arrangements indicate his profound trust in parliamentary democracy. The government of Bangladesh was led by Bangabandhu from January 12, 1972 to August 15, 1975. This government had the opportunity to perform only for three years seven months and three days. He made a unique contribution to build up the country from the heap of destruction done by Pakistani invading army and by building an honourable image of the country in the world through attaining international recognition in this very brief period of time.

### **How the country was rebuilt after the war**

The postwar condition of Bangladesh was simply horrible. Bangabandhu's government started literally with an empty treasury. Due to the 'parched soil' policy of Pakistani army the region of Bangladesh turned into a waste land. Administration along with physical structures was destroyed. In the international arena, no country except India and Bhutan gave diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh. The overall situation was very disheartening. There were misgivings whether Bangladesh would be able to continue its existence as an independent country. During the nine month long war of independence, Pakistani army along with their local collaborators Rajakars, Al-Badars, Al-Shams went crazy in the orgy of destroying assets side by side of genocide and rape. They burnt into ashes about 43 lacs houses, 3 thousand office buildings, 18 thousand primary schools, 6 thousand high schools and madrasahs, 9 hundred college buildings and 19 thousand rural bazaars all over the country.

In a planned way, the Pakistani army destroyed the communication system. 274 small and large bridges and 300 rail bridges were destroyed. The Pakistanis also made a large scale destruction to railway engines, carriages and rail lines too. The river ports were not usable because of mines planted by Pakistanis. Before the ultimate defeat, the Pakistan army burnt the bank notes stored in different banks and looted the reserve of gold. As a result, the banks were without any fund.

The government took the hard challenge of rehabilitation and reconstruction and started work. The administration framework was totally broken and so relief programmes were operated with the help of Red Cross and the Relief and Rehabilitation Committees beginning from the district headquarters to the remote villages. At the beginning of 1972, an official demand note was prepared on the basis of monthly demand to operate relief activities. The estimated monthly demand of food was two lacs to two lacs and fifty thousand tons, cement one lac tons, corrugated iron sheets fifty thousand tons, wood fifty thousand tons and medicine and other daily necessities two lacs metric tons. On January



14, 1972, Bangabandhu, at his first press conference as the Head of the government, also made an open call for wide assistance to all the states, freedom-loving peoples and international organizations along with presenting government's emergency work plan.

## **Development, reconstruction and rehabilitation programme**

### **Development in agriculture**

Immediately after the independence, the livelihood of 85 per cent of people was dependent on agriculture. More than half of the GNP came from agricultural sector. So Bangabandhu paid special attention to the development of agricultural system, for example-

- a) He made the land property up to 25 bighas tax free and wrote off all previously due taxes.
- b) He made a ceiling of land up to 100 bighas per family.
- c) More than twenty two lacs of farmer families were rehabilitated.

Despite resources constraints, Bangabandhu emphasized education for the development of human resources. He took an effective initiative within only six months of takeover to build up an education system suitable to an independent country. For this purpose, he formed an education commission headed by famous scientist Dr. Muhammad Kudrat-e-Khuda on 26 July, 1972.

### **Development in education**

Bangabandhu took some emergency steps in education. He rebuilt 900 college buildings and 400 high school buildings. For the first time, he nationalized all the primary schools. Consequently, the jobs of 1 lac and 65 thousand teachers working in those schools were also nationalized. He paid the due salaries of teachers of the nine months during the War of Independence. He passed the University Act 1973 in the parliament to give autonomy to public universities.

### **Development of road, rail and air communication**

The emergency reconstruction of all bridges destroyed during the War of Liberation started. By 1974, the communication system of the country was raised to a satisfactory level. On the Dhaka-Aricha road, 97 bridges including the larger ones were constructed. The destroyed rail bridges including the Hardinge Bridge were restored. A bridge over the Jamuna was also planned. The primary feasibility report of the Jamuna Bridge was prepared on 4 November, 1974. The air communication was also given priority. The operation of Biman in both inland and international routes and the work of making Tejgaon air port usable were finished quickly. The air link of Dhaka with Chittagong, Sylhet, Jessore and Comilla was established by 7 March, 1972. The first flight on Dhaka-London route started on 18 June, 1973.

### **First five year plan**

The government formed a planning commission in January of 1972 for preparing long term development plans of the new state. Measures were taken for the reconstruction of the war torn country, poverty reduction and the promotion of GDP rate between 3-

5.5%. Initiatives were also taken to achieve self sufficiency in food production and to gradually reduce dependency on external aids. Besides, the first five year plan (1973-1978) was made effective from 1 July, 1973 with the aim of overall economic development.

### **Background the constitution 1972**

The constitution is the supreme document of a state. This document can be either written or unwritten. The constitution of Bangladesh is a written document. People of Bangladesh achieved this document through a long struggle, sacrifice and blood. It can be mentioned that India and Pakistan got independence in 1947. India succeeded in making their constitution in two years, while Pakistan took nine years to prepare it, and it was not in effect though. But Bangabandhu's government gave the nation one of the best constitutions in the world in the briefest time of nine months only. It was possible only due to the sincerity and honest commitment to the people by the government led by Bangabandhu.

The government proclaimed 'Constituent Assembly Order' on 23 March, 1972 with a view to drafting the constitution of Bangladesh. The constituent assembly consisted of the elected members for the national and provincial assemblies from the part of the then East Pakistan in 1970 election. The only function of the constituent assembly was to draft the constitution of Bangladesh. So the constituent assembly had no provision to function as the legislature. The Order was made retrospectively in effect from 26 March, 1971.

The drafting of the constitution formally started with this Order. Awami League parliamentary party nominated Bangabandhu the party leader of the constituent assembly. The first session of the constituent assembly sat on 10 April, 1972. Shah Abdul Hamid was elected the undisputed first Speaker of the assembly and Mohammad Ullah was elected Deputy Speaker. A committee was formed to draft a constitution in the shortest possible time. Dr. Kamal Hossain was the convener of this committee. The member of the committee was 34 in number. The committee completed the final draft of the constitution by 11 October, 1972. The assembly started general discussion on the Constitution Bill from 18 October. After a long discussion, the Constitution Bill was passed on 4 November, 1972 in the Constituent Assembly. The Constitution was in effect from 16 December, 1972, the first anniversary of the Victory Day. In his speech at the assembly on the constitution, Bangabandhu said, 'This constitution is written in the blood of the martyrs. This constitution will prevail as the symbol of the hope and aspiration of the entire nation.' While India took three years(1947-1949) and Pakistan took nine years(1947-1956) to give themselves a constitution, Bangabandhu's government gave the nation a constitution only in ten months.

### **Characteristics of the constitution**

The constitution of 1972 was a written document. It was drafted both in Bangla and English. But Bangla was accepted as the original language. This constitution had one preamble, 11 Parts, 153 Articles and 4 Schedules.

The first part of the constitution is on the characteristics of the democracy, the second part is on the principles of the governance, the third part is on fundamental rights, the fourth part is on executive divisions, the fifth part is on Jatiya Sangsad, the sixth par

is on judiciary, the seventh part is on election, the eighth part is on comptroller and auditor general, the ninth part is on service commissions, the tenth part is on the amendments of the constitution and the eleventh part deals with miscellaneous.

1. **Supreme law:** The supreme law of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is the constitution of Bangladesh. So no law inconsistent with the constitution should be passed. It is proclaimed in the constitution that all power of the state rest with people of the democracy. That power can only be exercised being subject to the constitution and on behalf of the people.
2. **The fundamental principles of governance :** In the preamble of the constitution four principles are accepted as the fundamental principles of state governance. In this regard, it is mentioned in the constitution, '...the high ideals nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism which inspired our heroic people to dedicate themselves to, and our brave martyrs to sacrifice their lives in, the war for national liberation shall be the fundamental principles of the Constitution.'
  - a. **Nationalism:** The religion-based nationalism inherited from Pakistan proved null and void through the war of liberation. In contrast to this, Bangalee nationalism emerged on the basis of language and culture. Secular consciousness is the foundation Bangalee nationalism.
  - b. **Socialism:** Bangabandhu all through his political career told about the economic freedom of common people. He struggled to remove the sufferings of the distressed. A large portion of the freedom fighters were from lower middle class families. People's dream after liberation was that state will take measures to meet fundamental socio-economic demands of people. As a result, socialism was taken as a fundamental principle of state governance. In fact, to activate a socialist economy for establishing an exploitation-free society was the objective of the state.
  - c. **Democracy:** People of this region never enjoyed any democratic rights as citizens of Pakistan since 1947. The Constitution proclaimed that the state of Bangladesh will be democratic republic. Every citizen's fundamental human rights and liberty will be ensured by the state. The administration will be run by elected people's representatives.
  - d. **Secularism:** The objective of secularism in the Constitution was to avoid communalism and to avoid political status for any particular religion. Religion should not be used for political interest. The state will not patronize any religion. The state will ensure for every citizen the religious rights and the freedom to observe religious rites and rituals.
3. **Fundamental rights:** It is important that there be the assurance of certain rights for the development of a citizen's personality. It is important so that none can interfere one's individual freedom. That is why fundamental rights have been declared to be inviolable and sacred in the constitution.
4. **Unitary government:** According to this constitution, a unitary system of government was introduced to Bangladesh. There is no province or state in Bangladesh. The administration is run all over the country under the central government.
5. **The cabinet system of government:** The Constitution adopted a cabinet system of government. In this system, the cabinet is accountable to the parliament. The president is the administrative head. But all the executive authority lies with the prime minister and the cabinet. The president is the titular head.

6. **Unicameral legislature:** The Constitution provides a unicameral legislature. The legislature will consist of directly elected 300 members and 15 reserved-seat women members. The legislature will be called 'the House of the Nation' or Jatiya Sansad.
7. **Rigid:** A special procedure is followed for the amendment of this Constitution which is not as easy as the procedure of making law. For any amendment, vote of the two-thirds of the total members will be needed. The amendment bill will be sent for the approval of the president. The president will approve the bill in 7 days. After 7 days it will be assumed that the president has approved.
8. **Independent judiciary:** An independent and neutral judiciary is mentioned in the Constitution. The state will ensure the independence of the judiciary by separating it from the executive wing. According to the provisions of the Constitution, the chief justice and other judges will conduct judicial procedures independently.
9. **A ban on communal politics:** Religion-based politics is banned in consistency with the fundamental principles of the Constitution. It is done so that none can differentiate in the name of religion.

The most important success of Bangabandhu government is drafting a constitution in the shortest possible time. This Constitution is better than that of many countries and a well written document. There is the reflection of the hope and aspirations of a newly born country in the rules of the Constitution. The fundamental principles have played a role of torch bearer for the advancement of the new state.

### Foreign relations

The role of the foreign policy was very important to ascertain the existence and development of Bangladesh as a newly liberated country in the third world. Before Bangabandhu's home coming on January 10, 1972, Bangladesh did not get recognition of any foreign country except India and Bhutan. Most of the countries of the world were in confusion due to the anti-Bangladesh campaign led by Pakistan and their allays. On the other hand, it became very important to have assistance and cooperation of international community in the reconstruction of the war torn country. Bangabandhu realised by his long political experience and merit that two things should be given importance in the foreign policy of Bangladesh.

First: To enhance the acceptability of Bangladesh in the international arena through acquiring recognition.

Second: To ascertain the help of foreign countries in the reconstruction of the country.

Bangabandhu himself was in charge of the planning of the foreign policy of the new state. He always used to say of an independent and non-aligned foreign policy. While giving a direction for the foreign policy, Bangabandhu said, 'We want to make Bangladesh the Switzerland of South Asia.' We find the reflection of Bangabandhu's thought in the framework of foreign policy as stated in the Constitution of 1972. The modus operandi of foreign policy is peaceful coexistence and friendship with all, no enmity with anyone. Bangladesh will take the side of the exploited of the world in the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism.

The task of winning recognition for Bangladesh was not easy at all. Due to the inimical campaign of Pakistan, the Muslim world including China used to foster negative attitude towards Bangladesh. Because of the able leadership of Bangabandhu, Bangladesh won recognition of most of the countries of the world and almost all international organizations including the United Nations. With the unanimous resolution of the General Assembly, Bangladesh joined the United Nations as the Organization's 136th member on September 17, 1974. For the first time in history,



Picture : Bangabandhu's address in Bangla at the UN.

Bangabandhu delivered his speech in our mother tongue Bangla at the 29th session of the General Assembly on 25 September, 1974. As a result, Bangla won a new status in the international level. During the reign of Bangabandhu, two important states did not offer their recognition to Bangladesh. The two states are China and Saudi Arabia. Bangabandhu took sincere initiatives for normalizing the relationship with the two countries. China gradually began to grow positive attitude towards Bangladesh. Although China did not give recognition, it signed a trade treaty sent relief for the flood affected in Bangladesh. On the other hand, Bangladesh became the member of the Organisation of Islamic Countries and won recognitions of the majority Muslim states. Although Saudi Arabia was yet to give recognition, the image of Bangladesh became brighter among the Muslim states of the Middle East including Saudi Arabia due to able diplomatic communications. So the course of events indicates that the recognition of China and Saudi Arabia was only a matter of time.

Bangabandhu placed the national interest at the highest position in determining the relations with other countries of the world. Bangladesh grew a cordial friendship with India and Soviet Union including other socialist countries because of their various supports in our liberation war. In the post liberation period, India government gave foodstuff, petroleum and other necessities beginning from aircraft and ships as assistance and donation to help survive in the struggle for existence. India gave 67.01 per cent of the total foreign grants Bangladesh got till June 1972. Obviously, Bangladesh could not avert a massive human disaster without India's help at that time. Although India itself was a foreign grant receiver country of the third world, it gave a huge assistance in the reconstruction of Bangladesh.

But the needs of Bangladesh were much higher. It was not within the capacity of India to meet the needs. For further economic assistance, the government has to depend on East European states including Soviet Union. The socialist countries failed to support Bangladesh due to their own resources constraints. So later, Bangladesh had to depend more on capitalist countries and Muslim countries. Since the US was against the liberation war, Bangabandhu's government declined to accept the US assistance towards the beginning. For the interest of the country, Bangabandhu's government took effective initiatives to establish friendly relations with capitalist and Muslim countries. During the rule of Bangabandhu, Bangladesh won the recognition of 130 states of the world. Besides, the country received the membership of 14 international organizations including the UN, Commonwealth and the Organisation of Islamic Countries.

**The first general election in Bangladesh 1973**

The first general election was held in Bangladesh on 7 March, 1973. After the Constitution took effect, the constituent assembly was dissolved. Bangabandhu's government made an important contribution to the way of democracy by taking a decision for general election within the shortest possible time after the liberation. Awami League achieved landslide victory in the election. Among the 315 seats of the parliament including reserved women seats, Awami League won 306, Jatiyo Samajtantric Dal 2, Bangladesh Jatiyo League 1 and independent candidates won 6 seats. The huge popularity of Bangabandhu and the popularity of Awami League as the leading party in the war of liberation and the result of the general election was normally accepted by people. The new council of ministers was formed on 16 March 1973 under the leadership of Bangabandhu.

**The introduction of presidential system government**

The presidential system of government was introduced to the country on 25 January, 1975. The president became the authority of all power. The cabinet and the parliament had no power in this system of government. The change in the system of government was brought through the fourth amendment to the Constitution. According to this amendment, the president would be elected by people's direct votes for a 5-year tenure. He would be able to appoint and dismiss at his will the vice president, the prime minister, ministers and officers of other government departments. Besides, the president was given the authority to form a national political party for Bangladesh. After the formation of the national political party, other political parties would be declared void and illegal. President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman banned all political parties and launched 'Bangladesh Krishak Shramik Awami League (BAKSAL)' on 24 February, 1975. The chairman of this party was Bangabandhu and general secretary was M Mansur Ali.

The change in the system of government through the fourth amendment brought about a host of debates. The arguments against this system were that it curtailed the authority of the parliament, it gave unlimited power to the president and it introduced an undemocratic system by forming a single political party. Bangabandhu was conscious of the limitations of this system of government. He accepted this as a provisional system. The fourth amendment became unavoidable to face socio-economic and law and order situations of the country. The global political reality also influenced to the adoption of the fourth amendment. It is to be mentioned that socialist countries of the world have the instance of single-party political system. But before the new system of government could take effect in full swing in the country, the ruthless massacre was held on 15 August, 1975. So it was not possible to have the experience of good or bad effect of the system.

**The ruthless massacre of 15th August**

15th August, 1975 is a disgraceful day in the history of Bangladesh. On this day, the killers brutally assassinated the father of the nation and the members of five families. The murderers' bullet did not let even child Russel to live. The murderers who fell in a barbarous orgy of killing spree were some renegade army personnel. The military and civil plotters were behind the curtain. They were the beneficiaries of the 15th August brutal massacre. Many foreign and local well wishers cautioned Bangabandhu beforehand. It was not at all safe for the president to live in such an unprotected residence. But he was not at all worried about personal safety. He used to utter in firm trust, 'There's no Bangalee who will kill me.'

On 15 August, the day was yet to dawn. Dhaka was about to start its day. The father of the nation was still sleeping with his family at house No. 677 on Road No. 32. Of Dhanmondi The killers came down on to the street with ultra modern weapons including tanks, cannons and machine guns. Their target is to kill Bangabandhu, his family and his relatives. About 5.30 am, they started the onslaught on Babgabandhu's residence. The killers encircled Bangabandhu's house under the command of Major Mohiuddin, Major Huda, Major Pasha and Major Noor.

The killers entered Bangabandhu's house by force. Then the daylight became brighter. The residents of Dhanmondi area were panicked by the booms of gunfire. As per the blue print, the killers jumped on to the family of the father of the nation. Bangabandhu's family waked amid shouts, chaos and the booms of gunshots. The killers killed all family members one after another. Even child Russel was not exempted. One of the killer dragged Russel downstairs. Eight-year old Russel was utterly terrorized and started crying for his mother. The ruthless murderer took him upstairs again and shot him to death. The murderers shot the chest of Bangabandhu with stein gun. 18 bullet wounds were found on his chest. They murdered Bangabandhu's wife Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib, his sons Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal, minor child Sheikh Russel. 18 family members were killed including daughters in law Sultana Kamal and Rosy Jamal, brother Sheikh Naser, farmer leader Abdur Rab Serniabat, youth leader Sheikh Fazlul Hoque Moni and his pregnant wife Arju Moni, Beby Serniabat, Sukanta Babu, Arif and Abdul Naim Khan Rintu. Bangabandhu's two daughters Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana survived as they were abroad at the time.

Only in three and a half years of rule, Bangabandhu succeeded to lay the bed rock of advancement for the newly liberated country Bangladesh. Despite that the architect of Bangladesh, the best beloved leader of all in the country had to meet the end in this inhuman way. There are few instances of such pathetic, brutal and heartrending murder in the history of civilization. Local and foreign conspirators along with military and civil politicians were involved in the plot of Bangabandhu's murder. Khandakar Moshtak Ahmad was the ring leader of the murderers. We have turned into an ungrateful nation in the eyes of the world due to the murder of Bangabandhu. The usurpers tried to obliterate the Bangabandhu and his achievements from history. But their attempt failed because the history of Bangladesh cannot be written sidelining Bangabandhu's role in its making. Poet Annadashankar Ray said the same thing in the following few lines,

As long as the Padma Jamuna  
Gouri Meghna remain flowing,  
Marks of your deeds will remain glowing  
Oh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

### **Khondokar Moshtak's ascendance to power:**

The politics in Bangladesh was led to hopeless quagmire through the murder of Bangabandhu. Khondokar Moshtak ascended to power with the help of the murderers. To make his illegal power permanent, he declared martial law for the first time in liberated Bangladesh.

## Exercise

### Multiple choice questions:

1. In 1971, Bangabandhu was arrested on
  - a. 25 March.
  - B. 26 March.
  - c. 27 March.
  - D. 28 March.
2. Why did Bangabandhu take over as the prime minister?
  - a. Because he was a believer in parliamentary democracy
  - b. For the reconstruction of the country
  - c. To punish the rajakars
  - d. To administer the liberated state

### Read the following passage and answer the question No. 3 and 4:

In the state 'A', Ramesh, Abdullah, Linda Gomes and Amal Barua all celebrate their Puja, Eid, X-mas Day and Bouddha Purnima freely and with splendor. The state does not patronize anyone specially.

3. Which particular character of the 1972 Constitution is reflected in the state 'A'?
  - a. Democracy
  - b. Secularism
  - C. Nationalism
  - d. Socialism
4. That particular character gives people
  - a. religious freedom.
  - b. economic freedom.
  - c. social freedom.
  - d. cultural freedom.

### Creative questions:

Russel's friend Robert is charmed at the beauty of Bangladesh. He loves very much the green nature of this country. But the sight of dirty slums besides tall buildings has given much pain to Robert. In their country, the state undertakes the responsibility to meet people's demand of food, clothing, education and shelter. The aim of their constitution is to establish a society free from exploitation. Russel says, their constitution guarantees human rights and individual freedom and the government is run by elected representatives. The parliament is formed by the members directly voted by people. All executive power rests with the prime minister. But the president enjoys the highest respect in the country.

- a. Which date did Bangabandhu come back to his own country?
- b. Why did Bangabandhu introduce parliamentary system of government?
- c. Explain which character of the 1972 constitution is noticeable in Robert's country?
- d. 'A portion of the character of 1972 constitution is prominent in Russel's speech'.---Evaluate.



## **Chapter Fourteen**

### **Military rule and subsequent development (1975-1990)**

#### **Khondkar Mushtaq: Disgraceful Chapter in History**

As pre planned, Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed seized power after the brutal killings of August 15th. He was in power for about three months. He had been in politics with Bangabandhu for a long time. He was one of the confidants and trusted persons of Bangabandhu. However, he was the one who committed vile treachery with Bangabandhu. He gave birth to a disgraceful chapter in the history of this country.

**After the end of this chapter we will be able to -**

- describe, the beginning of military rule and the successive political development.
- describe the notable sides of the rule of President Ziaur Rahman.
- evaluate the 1982 military rule and the situation arising out of the developments thereafter.
- explain the important administrative reforms of the Ershad government.
- explain the background of the 1990 mass upsurge and its result.
- show positive attitude towards the significance of democracy in Bangladesh and its application.

The brief rule of Mushtaque ushered a state of serious disorder in Bangladeshi politics. An attempt was made to obliterate all the achievements of Bangladesh earned through the Liberation war, and restoration of Pakistan trend of thinking started. Within five days of usurping power, Mushtaque declared the first martial law in independent Bangladesh. In his address to the nation on 15th August, he started with 'Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim' and concluded by saying 'Bangladesh Zindabad'. Describing the killing of Bangabandhu as a historical necessity, he said that "little by little, under a suffocating situation, the countrymen were becoming ruined in silent pain. Despite the desire at all levels for a change in the country's system of government, the armed forces had to come forward for a change of government as it was not otherwise possible under the existing law. The armed forces opened ahead the door of golden opportunity through fulfilling their responsibility with utmost sincerity.'

Mushtaque tried to attribute the conspiracy of a few retired and dismissed low and mid ranking officers of the armed forces as a coup of the entire armed forces. Moreover, he referred to this brutal, barbaric killing as a door of golden opportunity. Mushtaque formed a cabinet with Awami League leaders through intimidation. It is not that some were not eager to join the cabinet. However, despite intimidating them with death, Mushtaque could not influence the four leaders and many others. Prime Minister Mansur Ali was arrested on 17th August. Tajuddin Ahmed and Syed Nazrul

Islam were arrested on 22nd August. About 20 leaders including Kamruzzaman, Abdus Samad Azad, Korban Ali were arrested on 23rd August. Many other leaders and workers were arrested as they refused to accept the leadership of Mushtaque. The four national leaders who gave leadership during the liberation war had to pay a heavy price. On 3rd November, Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Mansur Ali, and Kamruzzaman were brutally killed in the Central Jail while held prisoners there. Those who entered the Jail and killed the four national leaders were not arrested; no trial was held. Thus another disgraceful chapter was added to the history of Bangladesh.

During this time, Mushtaque took various anti -progressive initiatives that were contradictory to the spirit of the liberation war. For example, he abolished the war chant of the liberation war 'Joy Bangla'. Emulating 'Pakistan Zindabad' he introduced the slogan 'Bangladesh Zindabad' and like 'Radio Pakistan', he used 'Radio Bangladesh'. Mushtaque's most condemnable, detestable act was the promulgation of an order on August 20, 1975. According to this order, the killers of Bangabandhu and his family members could not be tried. In no civilized society can such a law be passed where killers cannot be tried. This black law against humanity known as 'Indemnity Ordinance 1975' was published in Bangladesh Gazzette on 26 September 1975. It was stated in the Indemnity Ordinance that with regard to all plans or activities taken for changing the government on August 15, 1975 and those who were involved in it, no recourse to any court of law could be taken as punishment to them. Not only that, Khondokar Mushtaque rewarded the killer gang with high posts both at home and abroad and provided them various privileges.

After the august killings, Mushtaque and his associates tried to establish control over the armed forces with the intention of lengthening and securing their power. As part of this attempt, the service of Army Chief K.M. Shafiullah was placed under the disposal of the Ministry of foreign Affairs. Mushtaque appointed Major General Ziaur Rahman as chief of army staff on 25 August. Brigadier H.M. Ershad who was undergoing training in India was promoted to Major General and appointed as deputy chief of army staff.

Pakistan was the first country to recognize the Mushtaque government. There was no end to the joy of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at the news of the brutal killing of Bangabandhu. Bhutto congratulated the killer gang because to him this was a victory for Pakistan as if it was getting back the area it lost in 1971. China and Saudi Arabia recognized Bangladesh on 16 and 31 August 1975 respectively. The downfall of the unpopular military government of Mushtaque came on 3 November 1975.

### **Khaled Musharraf's coup and counter coup :**

As a consequence of the 15 August killing along with the acute political vacuum in the country, the army was in chaos. It was not possible for Mushtaque to deal with army officers and soldiers. The killer group established their domination on state power by staying in Banga-Bhavan. Due to this, the chain of command in the army completely broke down. Despite the demands of senior army officers, newly appointed army chief, General Zia did not take any initiative to restore discipline in the army. This is because Zia got the post of army Chief with the cooperation of those involved in the 15 August killing.

Therefore, it was not possible for Zia to take a strong position against them. Under such circumstances, due to Zia's inactivity, dissatisfaction in the army grew further. The Chief of General Staff in the army, Brigadier Khaled Musharraf took initiative to resolve the leadership crisis in the army. He discussed with senior armed forces officers. He finally decided that it was not possible to restore the chain of command without a military coup. Colonel Shafayet Jamil played an important role in this coup. According to plan, Khaled Musharraf had a secret meeting with some trusted officers on 1 November. According to the final decision on the counter coup, it began with the return of the soldiers of the 1st. East Bengal regiment to the barracks in the cantonment from Bangabhavan on the night of November 2. Ziaur Rahman was placed under house arrest in the early morning of November 3. Khaled Musharraf continued to negotiate with Khondokar Mushtaque on assuming state power. At one stage, on the advice of General Osmany, the August 15 killers along with their family left Dhaka for Bangkok. In the morning of November 4th Khaled Musharraf came to know about the barbaric, brutal Jail Killing.

On the late night of November 3, 1975, prior to their leaving the country, a killer group, with the permission of president Mushtaque, illegally entered the central Jail and brutally killed the four Liberation War leaders Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Capt. M. Mansur Ali and A.H.M. Qamruzzaman. Despite intimidating them in various ways, Mushtaque had failed to persuade them to accept ministerial positions in his cabinet. As a result of that the killer group committed such a barbaric killing inside the Jail. This killing was the implementation of the conspiracy and blue print of the defeated forces of the 1971 liberation war and the domestic and international opponents of the independence. The main objectives of the two killings were to destroy the achievements of the independence and armed liberation war of Bangladesh, make the country leaderless and establish the ideals of Pakistan. The same group committed the killings of 15 August and 3 November.

On 4 November, Khaled Musharraf informed through an announcement that Ziaur Rahman retired from the post of Chief of Army Staff. He exerted pressure on Mushtaque to promote and appoint him as army chief. He had to face great difficulty in getting Mushtaque's consent in favour of the change in power. At last at mid - night of 5 November, Mushtaque was forced to relinquish power. Under the circumstances, Khaled Musharraf and the officers involved in the coup requested the then Chief Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem to take the responsibility of the president. On 6th November Justice Sayem took oath as president in the Durbar Hall of Bangladesh. By removing Mushtaque and Zia from power and freeing Bangabhavan from the control of the killer group, Khaled Musharraf succeeded in establishing his control on state power. Khaled Musharraf was popular and acceptable in the army because of his reputation as a brave, valiant freedom fighter. As commander of 'K' Force in the liberation war, he fought many times from the front. However, he failed in the leadership of the military coup. From 3 - 4 November, he was able to establish his control over state power for only four days. In a counter coup by Colonel Abu Taher (retired) on November 7, Khaled Musharraf lost power. Later, Khaled Musharraf and his close associates were killed.

### **Government of Justice Sayem**

In the subsequent date 07 November of taking oath of Justice Sayem as the president of the state the adverse violent seizure of state power occurred. While Ziaur Rahman was house-imprisoned, he requested Colonel Taher to make him free from jail through telephone. The heroic freedom fighter Taher lost a leg in liberation war by bomb blast. Zia knew that among the soldiers Taher did have leftist political supporters. For political supporting Taher involved the 'National Socialist Party' in this violent seizure of state power. This is an unexpected violent seizure of state power of army and history of Bangladesh. As per planning at the mid-night of 6 November under the leadership of Taher violent seizure of state power was commenced against Khaled Musharraf. The soldiers made Zia free from house imprisonment condition. Zia thanked Taher embarrassing the chest for saving his soul. Without any obstacle the soldiers declared Zia as the chief of staff.

Through returning to the state power of Zia, Mushtaque also desired that he would be settled on the post of the 'president of the state'. But due to lack of support from Zia Mushtaque could not be settled on his desired post. He could not return to the post of the president of the state. Though Justice Sayem remained on the post of the president of the state in the Bangabhaban, the real power of the state was under the power of the cantonment, in the hand of the chief of staff General Zia. For that reason, Justice Sayem could not take any decision freely during his reign. He delivered a speech for the nation that he gave commitment for forming the democratic government through election. But he could not continue that. On 21 April, Ziaur Rahman possessed the post of the president of the state formally by applying force. Indeed, before creating this situation the government of Sayem became inactive. For arranging election he imposed the responsibility upon Justice Sattar to discuss with the political parties. But Sattar was not interested for arranging election rather he motivated General Zia to capture the state power. Zia also did not do any stinginess in this respect. He appointed Sattar on the post of the Deputy President of the state.

### **Various steps for consolidating Zia's power**

Ziaur Rahman was an ambitious military officer. As a freedom fighter he had popularity in the army. After independence, the Bangladesh government gave him many promotions within a short span and promoted him to the rank of Major General. He was appointed Deputy Chief of staff of the Army in June 1972. In recognition of his contribution in the liberation war, Bangabandhu awarded him 'Bir Uttam'. Coming to power at the age of only 40 years, Zia took some steps to strengthen his hold on power within the shortest possible time.

### **Trial of Abu Taher**

Colonel (Retd.) Abu Taher was arrested on 24 November 1975 on charges of army revolt and anti - state activities. At the same time arrest of a large number of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leaders and workers started. This is because at that time, only Taher and JSD were capable of challenging Zia's power. On 21 June 1976, the trial of Taher began in Dhaka central jail amidst extensive security. The trial in camera under a special army tribunal was completed on 17 July 1976. The Chairman of this tribunal was Colonel Yusuf Haider, a repatriated army Officer from Pakistan. The tribunal

awarded death sentence to Taher. According to the Judgment of a farcical trial, Taher was hanged on 21 July 1976. During the trial period, Colonel Yusuf Haider, the Chairman of the tribunal frequently met General Zia in Bangabhaban. The two used to hold consultation for a long time. Due to this, it was thought that Taher would be punished but nobody could imagine that he would be hanged. After Taher's hanging, Colonel Yusuf was promoted to the post of Brigadier. The chief prosecutor of the trial A. T. M. Afzal was appointed as a judge of the High Court. Taher was hanged for the 7 November coup crime although the biggest beneficiary of this coup was Zia himself. Taher was killed in the name of so-called trial by the person whose life Taher had saved.

### **Establishment of control in the Army**

Widespread suspicion, distrust or lack of confidence was created because of the coup and counter coup in the army. Because of three military coup on August 15, 1975, November 3 and November 7 within almost three months, the chain of command in the army broke down. In the last coup, there was lot of bloodshed in the army, especially fear spread among the officers. In this coup, the slogan was 'All Sepoys are brothers, we want the blood of officers' and 'All Sepoys are brothers, there is no officer above the rank of subedar'. Due to the conflict between officers and jawans, there was no discipline in the army. Besides, there was dissatisfaction in the army for a long time over professional privileges and facilities.

Zia had rightly understood that his main task was to restore discipline in the army. This is because Army was the source of his power. There was no legal validity of his taking over power. In his own interest, for surviving in power, he tried to satisfy the army by providing them with different types of privileges and facilities. Arrangement was made to provide the sepoys with standard uniform, food, arms and ammunition. The status of the officers was also increased. In comparison to the Bangabandhu-Government, Zia increased military expenditure manifold. In 1974-75, defense budget was Tk. 75 crore. Zia increased it by almost three times to Tk. 206 crore 20 lakh. In 1976-77, it was increased further to Tk. 219 crore to 40 lakh.

### **Constitutional Amendment:**

On April 23, 1977, within three days of forcibly taking power from Justice Sayem, Zia imposed a martial law decree, bringing about fundamental changes in the 1972 constitution which was inspired by the liberation war.

- a) So far citizens of Bangladesh were known as 'Bangalee'. Zia gave the new identity 'Bangladeshi' to the people of this country.
- b) At the beginning of the constitution, before the preamble, 'Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim' was added.
- c) Replacing 'Secularism' as the state principle 'complete trust and faith on omnipotent Allah will be the basis of all activities' was added.
- d) Another main state principle 'Socialism' was described as 'Economic and Social justice'.

- e) With regard to foreign relations it was stated that efforts would be made to consolidate, preserve and strengthens brotherly relations with Muslim countries on the basis of Islamic solidarity.
- f) It was decided to use 'war of independence' in place of 'liberation war'.

The main purpose of the constitutional amendments by Zia was to earn the support of anti-liberation war or anti-Awami League parties and persons. The overall objective was to deepen the religious influence on the State and the people. Zia tried to stabilize his power by bringing back Pakistani spirit against the war of liberation spirit.

### **Start of domestic politics**

In an effort to reduce political unrest the military government promulgated 'Political Party Regulation' on July 28, 1976. Under some special conditions, permission was granted for forming political party and carrying out political activity. According to law, no party could indulge in politics without the permission of the martial law government. Zia adopted a go slow policy in granting permission to some political parties. 23 political parties out of 57 were permitted to carry out political activity.

### **Referendum**

Military rulers of many third world countries arrange referendum after illegally occupying power. The purpose is to give some kind of legitimacy to their take over. On April 22, 1977, a day after taking over power from Justice Sayem, President General Ziaur Rahman, in his address to the nation, announced holding referendum on 30 May, which was known as Yes/No Vote. An effort was made to show wide public support in favor of General Zia and his principles and program in the referendum of 30 May 1977. A government circular stated falsely that in the election 88.5 percent voters cast their votes.

### **Presidential Election 1978:**

After independence, presidential election through direct voting was held for the first time under martial law. Election date was fixed on June 3, 1978. There were two main contenders in the election: General Zia and General Osmani. In the meantime, two alliances were formed centering the election. Zia was the candidate of the Nationalist Front while Osmani was the candidate of the Democratic League. Shammobadi Dal (Toha), Purbo Banglar Communist Party expressed direct support for Zia. Awami League, Communist Party, Janata Party, National Awami Party (Mozaffar), Gono Azadi League and some other parties were on Osmani's side. Despite various kinds of adversity, Awami League took part in this election. There was no doubt that Osmani would not be successful against Zia in this unequal competition. The big challenge for Zia and his supporters was how to make this election credible at home and abroad. Zia was elected President by receiving 76.63 percent vote through rigging. Only 21.70 percent vote was shown in favour of Osmani. People did not get back their democratic right even after this election as martial law still continued.

### **Formation of a new political party**

Like other military rulers, General Zia, too, after taking over power, thought of forming a political party. Zia's journey started with the gaining of political support of

anti-Awami League camp. After independence, religion based politics was banned because of the anti-Bangladesh role of pro-Pakistani Jamaat-E-Islami, Nezami Islami, Muslim League and other religious parties. Zia provided the anti-independent forces opportunity to do politics by abolishing collaborators Act and the constitutional obstacle. Zia formed a new political party, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on September 1, 1978. He himself took the responsibility of the chairman of the party. Various anti-independent; and leftist, rightist parties and individuals joined BNP.

Many politicians gathered around Zia mainly in the hope of getting different privileges and facilities. Zia rewarded them in various ways by giving them various posts. A big number of advisers/ministers during Zia's rule was a close associates of Ayub and Yahya. Again, many were in the anti-independence role. Zia appointed a member of the anti-liberation group, Shah Aziz as the Prime Minister.

### **1979 Parliament Election**

According to the announcement of President General Ziaur Rahman, Parliamentary elections were held on February 18, 1979. Zia led BNP got 207 seats. Bangladesh Awami League (Malek) with 39 seats played the role of the opposition party. Leaders and workers of the opposition party had to face various obstacles - intimidations during the election campaign. In reality, the Election Commission could not work independently under the military government.

### **The fifth amendment in 1979**

The fifth amendment of The Constitution of Bangladesh was accepted in the parliament (Jatio Sangsad). By this amendment all the laws, ordinances, regulations declared and enacted by the unconstitutional Governments since the killing of Bangabandhu till 9 April 1979 were given legal protection. Zia withdrew martial law on 9 April 1979.

### **The law of indemnity**

The denotative meaning of Indemnity is either to protect or to take measures to protect someone. Who did the military Government want to protect? They were given protection who grabbed the power illegally by means the means of arms by killing the father of the nation along with his family members, as well as killing the four national leaders. They enacted an indemnity law saying that no case will be filed to any court in Bangladesh seeking their trail and thus they were given protection. It goes without saying that such a constitutional indemnity against any serial killing damaged the image of Bangladesh to the international community. It was a law against human rights and Zia was the mastermind behind it. Later the Government of Sheikh Hasina cancelled this indemnity on 12 November 1996.

### **Development work**

It is the usual practice by all the military Governments to blame the previous government. They do it as a pretext to justify their illegal measures of capturing power. Zia and his allies could successfully run the propaganda that there was no development work during the regime of Bangabandhu. They publicized that all the

development work and of the country and people's wellbeing were done by Zia. Zia declared his principles and programs based on 19 points on 30 April, 1977.

These programmes had highest priority on some popular issues. They included agricultural development, self-sufficiency in food, women empowerment, health for all, improvement of worker's conditions, a corruption free society, and equal rights for all citizens irrespective of their religious affiliations, caste, and creed. During his time, some other government programmes were also given priority. The canal digging programme, village government, youth cooperative centre and mass education were some of those programmes.

### **Canal digging**

During Zia's regime the most talked about issue was his canal digging programme or canal digging revolution, which was inaugurated on 1 December 1979 at Uloshi Jadunathpur in Jessore. However, the canal digging programme did not have much impact on the agricultural progress in the country.

### **Gram Sarkar**

The Zia government decided that every village in Bangladesh would have its own government known as Gram Sarkar. Such a system would enable the people to deal with their local problems, handle their own law and order situation, work for mass education and other development programmes in the locality. The first Gram Sarkar was established in Jirabo, Savar on 30 April 1980. In fact, the Gram Sarkar failed to contribute to development activities of the villages as they did not have financial power.

### **Mass education**

There cannot be any debate about the necessity of mass education. With the view to enabling 57,00,000 students to read and write, the Zia government started a mass education programme on 21 February 1980. However, owing to a lack of adequate planning, the mass education programme could not go far.

Zia gave incentives to private sector with a view to strengthening industrial sector. Sometimes state property was sold out with a minimum price. Yet, foreign investments could not be attracted. Though there was a routine growth of national income, revenue, and per capita income; the difference between the rich and the poor became too wide.

During his time, foreign aid and an import based economy was patronised. This had negative impacts in the long run, such as the number of tax evasion, black money, commission agents, smuggling of foreign currency increased. A new middle class was created in rural and urban areas by providing different sorts of financial benefits. This newly rich section was the direct beneficiary of Zia's martial law. Many people became billionaires overnight with the money they borrowed from the banks in the name of doing business and setting industries. At one stage these rich people appeared as loan defaulters. A huge part of national wealth was wasted due to corruption and abuse of power. Limitless military expenditure halted the national growth. 8,00,000 tons of food production decreased in 1976-77 in comparison to 1975-76. The number of landless people increased to 51 per cent in 1979. People had much hardship as there was price hike



for fuel, electricity, and rice in the ration. There was no significant change in the socio-economic conditions of the common people during the military rule.

**Foreign relations:**

Zia framed his foreign policy in line with his domestic policies. He gave importance to developing relations with Muslim countries and made it a part of the constitution. The Islamic identity of Bangladesh was highlighted as the reason of changing the foreign policy. As a result, from the very beginning Zia took an anti Indo-Soviet stand.

Bangladesh's relations with India became very cold, and bitter. Due to suspicious attitude, and disbeliefs, and lack of trust from both the sides, the relation between these two countries deteriorated much. Issues like the Farakka dam and border clashes made the politics in Bangladesh volatile. Anti Indian propaganda was in its peak nationally and internationally especially based on the Farakka Dam. Genarel Zia raised the issue of Farakka Dam to UN and other international orhanisations. When Indira Gandhi lost the election in India in March 1977 and Morarji Desai came to power in India, Bangladesh's ties with India improved somewhat.

During Zia time the relation between China and Bangladesh developed significantly though the process started during the tenure of Bangabandhu. Bangladesh signed a business treaty with China in May 1975. China gave recognition to Bangladesh on 31 August, 1975 when Mushtaq was in power. The relation between these two countries got more friendly by Zia's visit to China.

On the other hand, Zia took special move to better the relation with Pakistan. In 1976 diplomatic relation was established between Bangladesh and Pakistan by exchanging diplomats. The claim made to Pakistan during the regime of Bangabandhu regarding asset sharing and taking the stranded Pakistanis back remained unsolved. Due to Zia's excessive lenience to Pakistan within a very short time tele-communications, air and marine communications between these two countries were established , trade pacts were signed and courtesy visits of high officials also took place. The Pakistan Government and anti-liberation political organizations in Bangladesh began demanding that Bangladesh and Pakistan form a confederation with Pakistan. They demanded change of the national anthem, and the national flag. They also started propaganda in favour of introducing Islamic rule. However, due to the resistance of the freedom loving majority Bangalees, Zia could not take hold.

Zia took initiatives to develop Bangladesh's relation with the Middle East, far East, and the western countries. He also proposed a forum for increasing regional cooperation among the South Asian countries. It is also to mention here that the necessity fo such a forum for regional cooperation was felt and uttered by Bangabandhu after the independence of the country. Finally in 1985 the proposal was accepted by other south Asian countries when SAARC was formed in 1985.

In 1980, Zia suggested that cooperation among the states of South Asia be promoted through a regional grouping. This idea became a reality in 1985 when the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) came into being.

### **Zia's assassination:**

Ziaur Rahman was in power for nearly five and a half years. He didn't have to face any major movement though there was disappointment in national politics regarding martial law. The opposition could not organize any agitation against him due to repressive measures and different kinds of fears and panic. This is why Zia was not worried about political movement. But there were as many as 17 military coups against Zia. Every time he took sternest punitive actions against the revolutionary officers. Hundreds of military persons who were involved in those coups either were dismissed from their jobs or sentenced to death. Yet attack came on his life from the military side. On 30 May 1981, a group of soldiers of the Bangladesh Army murdered him in a coup at Chittagong Circuit House.

### **Justice Sattar's government**

General Zia was succeeded by his vice president, Justice Abdus Sattar as an acting president of Bangladesh according to the country's constitution. On the oath taking day, the then army chief, Ershad who was present on the occasion pledged his support to the 78 year old Sattar. According to the constitution, if the position of the president falls empty, then there has to be by election within 180 days. The new date of presidential election was fixed on 21 September, 1981.

Sattar was nominated as the presidential candidate by Bangladesh Jatiotabadi Dal. But according to constitution the position of the Vice President was a beneficable position and anyone holding could not contest the election. With the power of their majority in the parliament, BNP brought sixth amendment in the parliament that the office of the Vice President was not lubricant. Therefore Sattar had no legal barrier in contesting the election. Being over enthusiastic, and to show his absolute loyalty Ershad, the army chief, announced that army would fully support Justice Sattar in the election. Dr. Kamal Hossain was the candidate from Awami League in the election. BNP candidate tried to influence the election by taking all the services from the government. The opposition raised the point of poll rigging. 55.47 % of the total voters cast their votes. Securing 65.80 % of the total cast votes Justice Sattar was elected as the president. His nearest rival Dr. Kamal Hossain got 26.35% vote.

Being sworn in Sattar formed his cabinet with 42 members on 28 December, 1981. But after Zia's death the BNP's intra party feud rose to an immense pinnacle. Sattar faced difficulty in running his administration due to economic instability and deterioration of law and order. Sattar had to abolish his ministerial cabinet in three and a half months because of boundless corruption. Still Sattar was unable to save himself. On 24 March 1982, the elected government of President Sattar was overthrown in a coup d'état by General Ershad, who proclaimed martial law all over the country. He proclaimed that the armed forces had to take the power to keep the independence and sovereignty of the country up; and also to free the nation from the crisis of the armed forces, economy and administrative difficulties. To legitimize the illegal way of captivating power of the State and to expand their high ambition the illegal power grabbers always bring excuses like this. It is important to know instead of solving the problems Ershad himself created many new problems during his tenure from 1982 to 1990.

### **Military Coup: Ershad government**

Lt. General Hussein Mohammad Ershad who took power forcefully in 1982 ruled Bangladesh till 1990. He was chief martial law administrator till 1983 and from 11 December, 1983 to 6 December 1990 he remained as the President. For a short period of time Ershad made Justice Ahsan Uddin (from 27 March, 1982 to 10 December, 1983) as the country's President. He did not hesitate to remove him at his convenient time. In the mean time he dissolved the assembly.

He was overthrown in a mass movement on 6 December 1990.

### **Reformation of administration:**

After coming to power Ershad attempted to take the control over civil administration. On 28 April 1982, he formed a committee to re-organize the administration. On the basis of the suggestions of this committee he altered some frame work of the administration.

- A. Upazila:** General Ershad's regime turned the thanas of the country into upazilas (sub-districts). The plan was that under the elected representatives' the bureaucrat would perform and implement the administrative work of the local government. The upozilas would have elected bodies which would be responsible for the welfare of the population. In the first phase, 45 thanas were upgraded to upozilas on 7 November 1982. Eventually 460 thanas were turned into upozilas. The name of the administrative unit 'thana' was changed to 'upozilla' on 14 March, 1983.
- B. Sub division declared as Districts:** In order to decentralize the administration, the Ershad government upgraded existing sub- divisions (mohakuma) into districts. Thus Bangladesh was divided into 64 districts.
- C. Reforming Judiciary System:** Some important changes were made in the Judiciary system too. Munsef court and Magistracy were established in upozillas. Permanent benches of the High Court were established in Rangpur, Jessor, Barishal, Comilla, Chittagong and Sylhet. Later the Supreme Court decreed those benches illegal and the High Court was restored to its earlier position.

Ershad took some steps to reform some other sectors including education, agriculture, land, drug policy. But general people did not support the policies considering them anti-people. It was because were the mass people did not get any benefit out of them. With a view to establishing supremacy over public bureaucracy Ershad also appointed army officers frequently in different sectors of public administration.

### **Development programs**

Ershad tried to establish himself as a public oriented leader. By using government media and by holding meetings he wanted to show that his development program aimed at changing the condition of the masses in the rural areas. He announced an 18-point program on 17 March 1983 for the welfare of the people. This programme included his vision about national unity, food, clothing, housing, employment, foreign policy and others.

The economic condition of the country was not at all satisfactory during his period though he publicized heavily his development programmes through government television, radio and newspapers. The desired development could not be achieved

because of corruption and limitedness plunder. During Ershad's time dependence on foreign aid increased greatly. The 65% foreign aid dependency of the 1980-81 budget rose up to 126.3% in 1988-89. Army and civil bureaucrats as well as defected politicians were benefitted most from the culture of loan defaulters in his time. All parameters of economic development such as food production, GDP, GNP all showed a downward trend. But he increased the defense budget to strengthen the base of his power. He provided more amenities and facilities for the army personal for the same purpose.

### **International relations**

Ershad did not bring about any new changes in Bangladesh's relations with the outside world. He followed the paths of General Zia. He took further initiatives to improve relations with China rather than with India. Especially in military training, arms and ammunition he relied more on China. He could maintain cordial relations with the Muslim world, including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. But he was too heavily pro US. He even expelled a Russian diplomat from Dhaka to satisfy the US. He tried to ease tensions with India. However he did not take any initiatives to find solutions to the existing problems with India.

One of his major successes in international relations was forming SAARC. Seven neighboring countries in South Asia came together and formed the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The first summit of this organization was held in Dhaka in December 1985.

### **Referendum**

To legitimize his power, Ershad, like many other army rulers, made arrangements for a referendum. He could not hold presidential or parliamentary elections due to opposition from the political parties. At last in 1985, on March 21, he held a referendum. People had no interest in this referendum. Yet Ershad got 94.14% of the votes cast. Due to the conspiracy of the civil-military bureaucracy Ershad managed to get this huge number of votes.

### **Forming political party**

Ershad realised the need of a political party to strengthen his power. He formed Janadal, a new political organization, in 1984. Under the banner of this political party some other fronts such as Bangla Student Society, New Bangla Youth Committee, New Bangla Labor Federation, etc were formed. In fact, Janadal was formed with a combination of political opportunists and defectors of other parties. Later he formed Jatiyo Front on 16 August, 1985. A few political parties and leaders with no public support joined his front. Finally, on January 1, 1986, General Ershad formed his own political party - Jatiyo Party.

### **Election**

The third parliamentary election was held on May 7, 1986. 28 political parties, including Jatiyo Party, Awami league-led 8-party alliance, and Jamaat-e- Islami took part in the election. The BNP-led 7-party alliance boycotted the election. Jatiyo Party won the election by getting 153 seats out of 300. Awami League became the 2nd largest party by securing 76 seats. Awami League and other political parties raised

charges of a media coup and rigging against Ershad. Election observers also supported these allegations. A presidential election was held on 15 August 1986. All the main political parties boycotted the election. Ershad was declared elected as the president in this farcical election.

### **Islam-State religion**

General Ershad, through the eighth amendment to the constitution, made Islam the state religion. By this amendment he wanted to have the support of the pro-Islamic parties. He amended the constitution only for some political gains. It is to be said that making Islam the state religion went against the spirit of the great War of Liberation.

### **Demonstration against autocratic rule**

After the liberation General Ershad was the ruler to have faced opposition from the students and public, demonstration, hartal etc. Students had a vital role in the anti Ershad movement between 1982 and 1990. Dhaka University students played important roles in any activities against the military rule in this regard. This is why Ershad closed down Dhaka University and also other universities sine die at different times.

Political parties formed different alliances in the anti-Ershad movement. Under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, Awami League formed an alliance with 8 political parties. Under Rashed Khan Menon, the leftists groups formed a 5 party alliance. (Later these two alliances merged to 15 parties' alliance). On the other hand, BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, led a 7-parties alliance.

To curb the movement Ershad took the paths of suppression, repressions, tortures, and killings. Things like opening fire directly on processions or driving trucks over the protestors happened many times. On 15 February, 1983 Zafar, Jainal and Mozzamel were killed in police firing and many political leaders were arrested. The new student wing of Ershad, Chatra Samaj also launched terrorist activities to suppress the student movement. Roufan Boshonia, a student of Dhaka University, was killed by the Ershad's student front. At this juncture 22 student fronts jointly formed Shorbodoliyo Chatro Sangram Parisad to accelerate the anti- Ershad movement.

In the middle of 1987 all the parties realized that the movement will not be successful until common programmes are taken. In fact, right after the parliamentary and the presidential elections in 1986 all the political parties, general mass and the civil society burst into anger. Opposition parties started vigorous mass movement for the resignation of Ershad and for a free and fair election. The parliament had to be dissolved in December when all the opposition parliament members resigned together from the parliament in 1987. The 4th parliamentary election was arranged on March 3, 1988. All the major political parties, including Awami League and BNP, boycotted the election. In this farcical election without any voter, and participation of any political party Ershad's Jatiyo Party won by getting 251 seats. Under the leadership of the Government back leader A S M Abdur Rab, the Sommilito Birodhi Dal (combined opposition parties - cop) got 19 seats. Among the rest of the seats, Jashad (Siraj) won 3 seats, Freedom Party won 2 and the independent candidates bagged 25.

### **Mass movement of 1990 and downfall of Ershad**

During the reign of almost nine years Ershad had to struggle against the demonstration from the opposition. 15 party alliances under Awami League, 7 party alliance under BNP, Sramik Karmachari Okya Parisad (SKOP), Ayeenjibi Samanwai Parisad, Sammilito Sangskritik Joot, Farmers society ignited anti Ershad movement and spread the movement to remote areas of the country. Instability prevailed in the country because of Hartals, and blockades. At one point of the demonstration, on 10 November 1987, Nur Hossain was killed at the zero point near GPO. On the front and back of his body was written respectively 'Gonotontro Mukti Pak, Soiracher Nipat Jak' (Let democracy be free', 'Let the autocracy fall down'. The mass became more agitated from his death.

Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia were arrested on 12 November 1987 and Ershad government declared emergency in the whole country. During a public meeting of Sheikh Hasina in Chittagong on 24 January 1988 police fired openly and indiscriminately on the public. She escaped death narrowly. The whole country became agitated out of this issue. The siege of the secretariat on 10 October 1988 by the alliances and political parties made the political situation even worse. On that day, 5 persons were killed and more than three hundred were wounded. In the sequel of demonstration, in the year 1990 on 27 November Dr. Shamsul Alam Milon was killed at the corner of TSC in Dhaka University and the anti Ershad movement turned into mass up rising. On this day the government announced emergency and imposed curfew. The publications of newspapers were shut down by the journalists. The students and teachers of Dhaka University brought out processions by disobeying the emergency and curfew imposed by Ershad on 27 November. Public took control over the roads and streets. Dhaka became a city of processions. Under these circumstances, Shahabuddin Ahmed, the chief Justice of the High Court was made the chief of interim government according to the outline given by the three political alliances. Ershad was forced to hand over the power to an interim Government headed by Justice Shahabuddin, on 6th December, 1990. Ershad's long autocratic rule came to an end because of the mass movement of the students and the common people.

## **Exercise**

### **Multiple Choice Questions**

1. Who proclaimed 'Indemnity Bill' in 1975?
  - a. Khondoker Mushtaq Ahmed
  - b) General Ziaur Rahman
  - c) Brigadier Khaled Mussaraf
  - d) Justice Sayem
2. What was the special strategy Ziaur Rahman took to consolidate his power?
  - a. Increasing the military budget
  - b. Introducing an internal political system
  - c. Taking initiative to form "SAARC"

Which one in below is correct?

- |            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| a. I       | b ii and iii      |
| c I and ii | d) i ,ii, and iii |

**Read the passage below and answer question 3 and question4:**

After seizing power to rule the country the undemocratic government legitimizes work such as mass killing, taking power in an undemocratic way, etc, and provides protection and legality to the work done by its likeminded people. In that way, an amended law is made in the parliament to block the trial of the crimes.

3. Which amendment of Bangladesh relates to the activities said in the stem or the above text?

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| a) First  | b) Second |
| c) Fourth | d) Fifth  |

4. Through this amendment -

- i. the rule of law was blocked.
- ii. the image of the international community was damaged .
- iii. affected social life.

Which one in below is correct?

- |              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| a) i         | b) i and ii      |
| c) i and iii | d) i ,ii and iii |

**Creative question:**

1. Alene was bewildered by watching an anti military and mass movement movie. Due to the military oppression people were suppressed and confined. As a result political parties, general people, farmers, labours, lawyers, doctors, and cultural units started agitation. They had the slogans of freedom of democracy. Nothing could stop them even the bullets of the police. Moreover, these oppressive measures made public more agitated, and processions were seen throughout the country.

- a. Who established Upazilla system?
- b. What do you understand by 'Indemnity Law'?
- c. The stem reflects characteristics features of a certain movement in post independent Bangladesh. Explain which movement is it?
- d. Evaluate the statement ' Democracy could be gained through this movement'

## **Chapter Fifteen**

# **World Civilization**

The primitive people did not know cultivation. They wandered around forests and collected fruits and roots. They were their only food. Then they learned to break down stones and carve out weapons of stones. In those days stone-made weapon was their only instrument for survival. This is why the age was known as the Stone Age. The first part of the Age was known as the Old Stone Age or the Paleolithic Age. In this age men hunted animals collectively. They also knew the use of fire.

The Late Stone Age ended with human being's learning to cultivate and it brought an end to their nomadic lifestyle. This age was known as the New Stone Age or the Neolithic Age. Man started to live on the banks of rivers for the purpose of farming land. They learned to build houses and infrastructures. Little by little civilization was formed. In this chapter we will discuss the true stories of how men gradually built up civilization.

**After the end of the chapter we will be able to-**

- describe the gradual evolution of the Ancient Egyptian culture;
- discuss the state and society of the ancient Egypt with the significance of the Nile river;
- evaluate the contribution of Ancient Egypt in the gradual development of world civilization;
- know the story of discovery and the geographical location of the Indus Valley Civilization;
- describe the political, socio-economic and the religious condition of Indus Valley civilization;
- describe Indus civilization's urbanization, arts and sculpture in the development of civilization;
- discuss the emergence of the Greek civilization by mentioning the geographical location and the time frame;
- explain the concept of a democratic state in respect to a military state;
- describe the contribution of the Greek Civilization in education, religion, culture, philosophy and science in the development of world civilization;
- describe the ancient Roman civilization by mentioning the geographical location and the time frame;
- explain the different stages of Rome and the Roman empire;
- analyze the contribution of Roman Civilization in the development of education, literature and the writing system;
- describe the contribution of Roman civilization in architecture, sculpture and science in developing world civilization;
- discuss the contribution of religion, philosophy and law of the ancient Roman civilization in developing world civilization;
- respect the ancient history and tradition by learning about the world civilization.



**Egyptian Civilization:**

**Background:** The North-east side of the African continent which is now known as Egypt was once the center of the Ancient Egyptian civilization. The first civilization to emerge in Egypt was around 4000 B.C. One part of this civilization was known as North Egypt or Lower Egypt and the other was known as the South Egypt or the Upper Egypt. From 5000 B.C to 3200 B.C, one state coalesced on the banks of the Nile River. In the history of ancient Egypt this period was known as the Pre-dynastic period. From this time onwards Egypt began to influence the ancient civilizations through many contributions.



Ancient civilization of Egypt

In the later periods from 3200 B.C the Early Dynastic Period began which marked the beginning of the historical eras of Egypt. In this period, Narmer or Menes (known by both names) united the Lower and Upper Egypt and became the first ruler and priest of Egypt. He is known to be the founder of the First Dynasty in Egypt and receives the honor of being the first Pharaoh. Hence Egypt under the rules of the Pharaohs began to flourish and leave its mark in the world civilizations with important contributions.

**Geographical Location:** From a geographical point of view Egypt was situated in a very important location with three continents surrounding it. The country was situated on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, surrounded by Asia, Africa and Europe. In the north of Egypt is the Mediterranean Sea, in the east the Red Sea, in the west the Sahara Desert and Sudan and other African countries in the south. It has a total area of nearly 4,000,000 square miles.

**Time Frame:** The Egyptian civilization continued for more than 2500 years. The long and sustaining history of Egypt began in the 5000 B.C particularly in the Neolithic Age.

However, Egypt was founded under the leadership of Menes and maintained its glory and zenith for 3000 years. In the 10th century B.C a barbarous nation of Libya took over the throne from Pharaohs. In the 670-662 B.C the Assyrians spread their dominance over Egypt. But in 525 B.C the Persians took over Egypt and the glorious sun of the Ancient Egyptian Civilization finally came to set.

**State and Society:** In the Pre-dynastic period Egypt was divided into small administrative regions. They were called nomes. The first ruler or the first Pharaoh, Menes or Narmer, in 3200 B.C united the entire Egypt into one state and made Memphis, located in South Egypt, the capital. From then on, Egypt became a unified state and the dynastic rule emerged. The title Pharaoh originated from the Egyptian term "pr-aa" which means "great house". The Pharaohs were very powerful. They believed they were the decedents of the sun God. The title was not earned, it was inherited. Only the son of a Pharaoh could inherit the title of Pharaoh.

**Individual Work:** Make a chart showing gradual periods of the rise and fall of the Egyptian Civilization

The Egyptians could be divided into particular classes based on their professions; such as, royal family, priest, elites, scribes, traders, artists and the farmers and slaves to the lands.

The economy of Egypt was basically agriculture based. The staple agricultural products were wheat, barley, cotton, leeks, grapes etc. In trade and commerce they were equally advanced. The cultivated wheat, sheets of linen, earthen pots etc from Egypt was exported to Crete Islands, Phoenicia, Palestine, Syria and other neighboring countries. The Egyptians imported gold, silver, elephant tusks, wood from their neighboring countries.

**Nile River:** The Nile River originated from the Victoria Lake of Africa. From there the river ran through different countries and finally through Egypt it fell into the Mediterranean Sea. The father of history Herodotus aptly said, "Egypt is the gift of the Nile". Without the Nile River, Egypt would have been nothing but a desert. In the ancient times the Nile River flooded every year. After the flood the land on both sides of the banks would be fertile with the black silt and Egyptians would cultivate many crops in the silt left behind by the flood water.

**Contribution of the Egyptians to civilization:** There is no way to dispute the contribution made by the Egyptians. From their religious beliefs, art, sculpture, script writing to their invention of paper, science and discoveries, everything is a part of the tremendous contribution they have made to the development of civilizations. A very unique characteristic of the Egyptians was that every sphere of their lives was influenced by their religious thoughts and beliefs.

**Religious beliefs of the Egyptians:** Probably there is no nation among the ancient civilization were more involved and influenced by the religious rituals than the Egyptians. Because of this, many of the philosophical ideas, rules and regulations, rites and rituals of the human civilization came from the Egyptians. They worshipped inanimate objects, idols and also animals. There have been many changes in their religious views. They had a firm belief that the sun God 'Ra' or 'Amun Ra' and the God of nature, agriculture and the Nile 'Osiris' together ruled over the entire world. However the most important God to the Egyptians was the sun God 'Ra'.

**Individual Work:** Draw a chart of the exported cash crops and the imported trade products of Egypt.

The Egyptians believed that the dead will again be alive. So to keep the dead bodies fresh they created mummies. From this idea they created Pyramids to protect the mummies. The Pharaohs were the representatives of God on earth and so they were the chief priests and they appointed other priests in different services.



Pic : Pyramid

**Industry:** The paintings and art of the Egyptians are very diverse and historically important. Similar to other countries the art and painting spurred from the religious beliefs of the Egyptians. They first started the painting to decorate their pyramids and their tombs. The popular colors of the time were black and white. In the tombs, pyramids, temples, palace, gardens and even in the walls of common households, the Egyptian artists used to draw beautiful and spectacular pictures. These pictures depicted the political, religious, social and family lives of the ancient Egypt.

The Egyptian artists also had tremendous achievements in curving and sculpting. The furniture, earthen pot ware, gold, silver and valuable stone plates, ornaments, mommy's faces, everyday tools, elephant tusks etc, bear the mark of excellence of the Egyptian craftsmanship.

**Individual Work:** Draw a chart of the murals illustrated in the wall by the artist of Egypt.

**Sculpture:** No other civilization has been able to make such a contribution than the Egyptians in the art of sculpting. The greatness of size, diversity of style and the religious fervor found in the large scale statues reflect the excellence of the sculpting art of the Egyptians. All the statues whether of animal or human are influenced by the religious feelings, rituals and philosophy of life and death. Each and every one of the sculptures was in some way or the other spiritual artisanship. The greatest specimen of Egyptian sculpture is the Sphinx in Giza. The Sphinx is a statue that has the body of a lion and the head of a man. The biggest Pyramid in Egypt is Pharaoh Khufu's pyramid. The temples of Egypt also reflect the beautiful work of sculpting of this great civilization.



Pic : Sphinx

**Writing System and the Invention of Paper:** One important feature of the Egyptian civilization was the invention of written characters and letters. The writing system in Egypt emerged as soon as the spread of urbanization. 5000 years ago they were the first to invent a 24 consonant alphabet system. At the very beginning, however they communicated and expressed their feelings by drawing pictures. This type of writing system was known as Hieroglyphic writing.

The Egyptians learned to make paper from the mash of reed-like plant. They wrote on this paper. The Greeks called this paper papyrus. The English word paper came from the word papyrus. It is noteworthy that Napoleon Bonaparte in his campaign to Egypt discovered a stone plate that is known as the Rosetta stone. In this stone is encrypted in Greek and Hieroglyphic language information about the ancient Egypt.



Pic : Writing system

**Science:** The Egyptian civilization was agriculture based. So the flood, the navigability, the measurement of current, ebb and flow of the River Nile and the measurement of land were very important for the Egyptians. Astrology and mathematics had a deep connection with these measurements. So the Egyptians managed to master this two discipline for the purpose of necessity. They started two branches of mathematics: geomatry and arithmetic. The Egyptians knew how to add, substract and divide. In 4200 B.C the Egyptians invented the first solar calander of the world. They also came up with the concept of 365 days for a year. The ancient Egyptians invented sun dials, shadow dials, and water dials to measure time.

The Egyptians were interested in applied science for their faith in religion. they believed in the after life and believed that the Pharoahs will be emperors in the next life. So they invented ways to prevent the dead body of the Pharoahs from decaying. From this practice they came up with the process of mommification. The Egyptian scientists found out ways to stop the body from decomposing using chemicals and other proceduers.

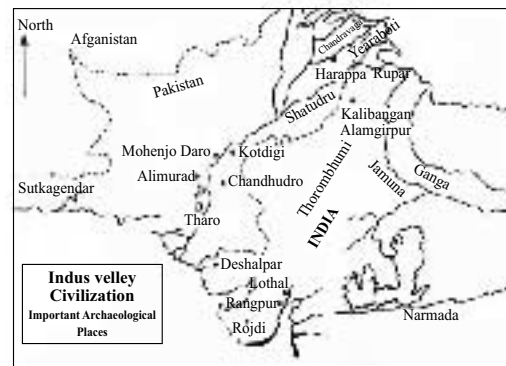
The ancient Egyptians were also advanced in medical science. They knew how to diagnose diseases of the eye, teeth, stomach etc. They also knew how to cure diseases through surgery. They could successfully attach broken bones, read the pulse and measure the heart beat.

The Egyptians practiced philosophy and literature. They did not have sorrow or sufferings in their literature. They were very positive and optimistic. Their literature exubarates happiness and prosperity.

**Individual Work:** What is the relationship between agriculture and astrology and between agriculture and mathematics?

### Indus Valley Civilization:

**Background:** This civilization emerged in the basin of the Indus River also known as the Sindh river and so it is called the Indus Valley civilization. The culture of the Indus Valley civilization is also known as the Harappan culture or the Harappan civilization. The story of the origin of this civilization is very interesting. There were many hills in the city of Mohenjo Daro in the Larkana district in the present day Sindh Province of Pakistan. The local people called these hills 'the hill of the dead'. (the meaning of Mahenjo-daro is the same). Under the guidance of the Bengali acheologist Rakhaldas Bandopadhyay people of the archeology department started to excavate the hills thinking they would find some ruin site of Buddhist temples. Unexpectedly they came across specimen of the Bronze Age civilization. Right about the same time in 1922-23 AD, by the efforts of Daya Ram Sahni, another excavation in Harappa in the Mount gomari district in the west Punjab took place where ancient civilization was discovered. Under the guidance of John Marshal, many other sites were discovered by the archeologist department. Mohenjo Daro and Harappa both were the center for the one civilization, the Indus Valley civilization. It is the most ancient civilizations of the subcontinent.



Map : Indus velley civilization

**Geographical Location:** Although Indus Valley civilization is the earliest civilization of the subcontinent, it spread over a large area. The biggest sites that revealed the most specimen of this civilization were Mohenjo Daro and Harappa; yet, this civilization was not restricted to only these two cities. From Pakistan's Punjab and Sindh Province to India's Punjab, Rajasthan and in different places of Gujarat there have been discoveries of the evidence of this civilization. Historians believe that from Punjab to the Arab Sea the Indus Valley civilization expanded to a large area.

**Individual Works:** In which regions of India and Pakistan has the specimen of Indus Valley civilization been found? Make separate lists of the regions of each country.

**Time Frame:** There are different opinions among the historians about the time frame of the Indus Valley civilization. According to the experts 3500 B.C to 1500 B.C is the period of the rise and decline of this civilization. However there are again different views among the experts regarding the decline of this civilization. Mortimer Wheeler believes that this civilization existed from 2500 B.C to 1500 B.C.

**Political and Social situation:** Nothing certain is known about the political life and the governing system of the Indus Valley civilization. The urban design of both Mohenjo Daro and Harappa were quite same. A careful observation of the ruins of both the cities reveals that the cities were built premeditatedly on high foundations. A city fortress was built in a platform at one side of the city. The city was protected by a wall. The rulers of the city lived inside the city fortress. The administrative houses were also situated within the fortress. The city had an entrance gate. The fortress and the large buildings indicated a centralized government system that had ruled the two cities for several years. This centralized administration controlled the lives of the common people.

People lived together as a community in the Indus Valley civilization. Nuclear family system was a very common custom. The society was divided into social classes. All men did not enjoy the equal rights. There were mainly two classes in society: the rich and the poor. The farmers lived in the villages. There is evidence of two different types of households in the city for the rich and the labour classes.

For clothes they usually used cotton and wool. The Indus Valley civilization was matriarchal. Women of this civilization had a very refined taste. They loved wearing ornaments. The popular ornaments for women were necklace, bracelet, rings, ear rings, waistbands, armlet, bangles, anklets etc. they wore long embroidered clothes. Men in the society also wore ornaments.

**Economy:** The people of Indus prospered on the foundations of agriculture based economy and a lion's share of their economy depended on the produced crops. Animal husbandry is another important part of their economy. Aside from the subsistence of agriculture and animal husbandry, the Indus people supported themselves by pottery, metal work, weaving, making ornaments, and working with valuable stones. Through trading high quality goods, the Indus Civilization expanded its culture, coming into regular contacts with faraway lands. They maintained regular trading relationship with traders from Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Central Asia, Persia, Mesopotamia, Southern India and Gujarat.

**Religion:** As there is no evidence of any temples or monasteries in the Indus civilization, it is not clear what religious views the Indus people harbored. However there is no doubt that they had some sort of religious views. Although there is no existence of temples and places for worship, in view of the large number of female terracotta figures found in the Indus valley, some scholars believe that the Indus people worshipped Goddesses. Mother-worshipping was very popular among the Indus people. They also worshiped trees, stones, snakes and animals as Gods and Goddesses. They believed in the afterlife and for that reason they kept everyday items and ornaments in the grave of the dead.

**Individual Work:**

1. Make a list of the popular ornaments of the women of the Indus Civilization.
2. What is the relationship of the prosperity of the crafts and the prosperity of trade in Indus Valley civilization?

**Contribution of the Indus Civilization:** One of the earliest civilizations of the world is the Indus Valley civilization. The contribution of this civilization is as follows:

**Urban Planning:** Harappa and Mohenjo Daro are the two biggest cities found among the ancient cities in the region believed to be of the Indus civilization. All the houses in both the cities are made of terracotta and sun-burnt bricks. A sophisticated and technologically advanced urban culture is evident in the Indus Valley Civilization. The quality of municipal town planning suggests the knowledge of urban planning and efficient municipal governments. The design of both Mohenjo Daro and Harappa are the same. There are major streets that ran across the cities. The streets were straight. Every house had open courtyards, wells and bathrooms. Waste water was directed through smaller drains to the main covered drains, which lined the major streets. The drainage system helped to keep the streets clean. There were lamp posts in both sides of the streets.

**Measurement system:** The people of the Indus Civilization achieved great accuracy in measuring length, mass, and time. They were among the first to develop a system of uniform weights and measures. They used different weights and ratios of weights for practical and every day purpose. They knew how to use scale to measure lengths.

**Industry:** The first thing that comes to mind when we talk about the industries in the Indus civilization is their pottery industry. They knew how to use the potter's wheel and made beautiful earthen pots with it. They also drew attractive designs on the pots. The weavers were expert in weaving and knitting. Furniture, weapons and ornaments were made out of metal. They learned to make bronze from the mixture of copper and tin. The craftsmen made utensils out of silver, copper and bronze. They were also experts in making ornaments out of gold, silver, copper, electrum and bronze. The mentionable ornaments were rings, bangles, nose ring, necklace, ear rings, armlets etc. The Indus people did not know the use of iron. Apart from metal Indus people were able to make ornaments with valuable stones as well. They were expert craftsmen in handicrafts made from elephant tusks.

**Group Work:** Make a list of industries that the people of the Indus Valley Civilization were good at.

**Architecture and Sculpture:** The Indus Valley civilization has left a very important and amazing contribution in the field of architecture. We have found from two-room houses to twenty-five room houses. In some places three storied houses were found. The most significant specimen of architecture in Mohenjo Daro is the Assembly Hall that is 80 feet long. A palace has also been found. In Harappa there is a big Granary. The Great Bath found in Mohenjo Daro is houses a bathtub that is suitable for indoor swimming.



Pic : Great Bath

In the art of sculpting the Indus civilization also left its mark of excellence. Although the stone statues that were found were very few in number the quality and the craftsmanship in them were exquisite. So far 13 figures and one lime stone head were found from this civilization. In Mohenjo Daro one dancing female figure was found. Besides these many small human and animal figures were also found that belonged to this civilization. 2500 seals were found in excavations in Harappa and MohenjoDaro. These were used for trading and religious purpose.



Pic : Seal

**Work:** Fill in the chart:

Architecture of the Indus Civilization	Location of the site

### Greek Civilization:

**Background:** For many years archeologists around the world have been fascinated with the truth behind the alluring stories of 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' written by Homer, the great poet of Greece. Around the end of the 19th century Homer's story did not only reside in his poetic verses, the truth of one of the great civilizations of the ancient times came out. The Greek civilization is one of the great ancient urban civilizations situated in the Aegean archipelago and the west coast of Asia Minor. Evidence was found of the ruins of the epic city of Troy, which was known as the Aegean Civilization or the pre classical Greek civilization.

It is bounded by the Greek mainland on the west, Asia Minor (now Turkey) on the east, the island of Crete on the south including the small islands of the Aegean Sea. The Greeks were part of a very prosperous and culturally enriched nation. This civilization can be divided into two parts-

The earliest is known as Minoan civilization, because its center at Knossos (also spelled Cnossus) on the island of Crete was the legendary home of King Minos. The time period for this civilization is from 3000 B.C to 1400 B.C.

The later culture is called Mycenaean or Achaean civilization, after Mycenae, a city on the Greek peninsula named the Peloponnesus. Mycenae was the capital of the region ruled by King Agamemnon, the Achaean leader in the Trojan War. This civilization existed from 1600 B.C to 1100 B.C. It is believed that flood or foreign invasion brought a decline to this civilization.

**Geographical Location and Time Frame:** Greece is surrounded by the Adriatic Sea, the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. There are two terms that go complimentary with the Greek civilization. One is 'Hellenic' and the other is 'Hellenistic'. The Hellenic culture flourished in the capital city of Athens in the Greek peninsula. On the other hand the Hellenistic culture flourished with the amalgamation of Greek and the Non- Greek cultures in Alexandria in Egypt under the rule of Greek emperor Alexander the Great.

**Sparta, the Military State:** Sparta is one of the many city states that emerged in ancient Greece. This city state was situated in the south of Greece in the area known as Peloponnese. Sparta was different from other city states. A close observation into the lives of the Spartans reveals that they were influenced by military actions and war tactics. Their focus was to

increase the military resources of the city rather than to improve the quality of life for the citizens. In 800 B.C after a long battle, the Dorian soldiers were able to take over Sparta. The local people who were defeated in the war were land slaves and were called 'helots'. They would instigate revolution whenever they got a chance. The defeated inhabitants who were forced to become land slaves were large in number. So to maintain order and to sustain their rule, the rulers of Sparta had only one thing on their minds which was to suppress revolution.

The Spartans' lives were dedicated to save Sparta. The Spartan society emerged from the necessity of war. And the rulers of Sparta were dedicated to prepare its citizens for war and to lead the army. For their war-driven attitude the Spartans were left behind in social, political, economic and cultural advancement.

**Athens, the Democratic State:** In the ancient Greece the first democratic state to emerge was Athens. But in the earlier days Athens was a monarchy. In the 7th century B.C the monarchy declined and a form of aristocracy emerged. The power came in the hands of a few Elites. They only looked at their own interest in the name of ruling the state. As a result agitation built up among the mass people. They called the rulers 'Tyrants'. The gradual disappointment among the common people and the deprivation of the farmers was turning into a possibility of an uproar, a revolution. Consequently, in the 7th century B.C there was a reform in the state administration. Earlier the members of the noble families were thought to be aristocrats. But after the reform, wealth became the primary standard of aristocracy. In the time of crisis all the people of the state unanimously nominated a few people to bring reform to the state. Among those few people the most famous of the aristocrats was Solon. He introduced some new laws and minimized the strictness of the previous laws. He passed the law to free the farmers from debt. He was also responsible in bringing economic reform to the state of Athens.

After Solon, Peisistratos and Cleisthenes were the ones who came forward to establish the rights of the people of Athens. They both worked to reform the laws and to bring prosperity and peace to the people of the state. However Athens saw the zenith of democracy in the time of Pericles. His time is known as the golden age of Greece. In 460 B.C he came to power and ruled for 30 years. He accepted all the political demands of his citizens. During his time he gave his citizens right to fully participate in the administrative, legislative and judicial system of the state. The members of the jury who gave the verdict of the trial were chosen from the common citizens. Athens reached the height of success in every field during the time of Pericles. In 430 B.C one fourth of the people of Athens died in the terrible plague. Pericles also died in the plague. After his death Athens lost its former glory and decline became inevitable.



Pic : Pericles

Athens, the state that had great achievements in science, philosophy, literature and politics fell to the military state of Sparta. The longtime war that went on between the two states was known as the Peloponnesian war. The Peloponnesian War (460 - 404 B.C) was fought three times between the two leading city-states in ancient Greece, Athens and Sparta. The



two states formed coalition with their respective allies. Athens formed the Delian League with its allies. Peloponnesian league was lead by the Spartans. As a result of the war Athens lost its prosperity and independent. In 369 B.C. Athens surrendered to Sparta. In 338 B.C the Macedonian King Philip took over Thebes and Athens came under the Macedonian rule.

**Group work:** Make a list of name of those persons who brought various reforms and passed laws for the welfare of the people of the state.

**Contribution of Greece to Civilization:** Although for the geographical location the Greek city states were separated from each other, their culture was the same. They believed that they inherited the same cultural trend in spite of the political difference. Their language, religion, literature and game all bound the whole Greece together. Athens played a dominating role in defining the culture of Greece. They gave the name of this culture Hellenic Culture.

**Education:** The Greek scholars had much idea about education. They gave importance to moral and spiritual education. Some of them thought that the responsibility of ruling the state should be in the hands of educated nations. The education system should reflect the philosophy and the goal of the government. The main purpose of education is to teach discipline and obedience. Greek boys at the age of seven start going to schools. The boys from the rich family were educated formally until they were 18 years of age. The boys of the farmers and the craftsmen were educated in the primary level. The slaves were prohibited from going to schools. The girls were not allowed to study in any institution.

**Group Work:** Fill in the Chart

Who have done what for the welfare of the citizens of Athens-	
Solon	
Pericles	

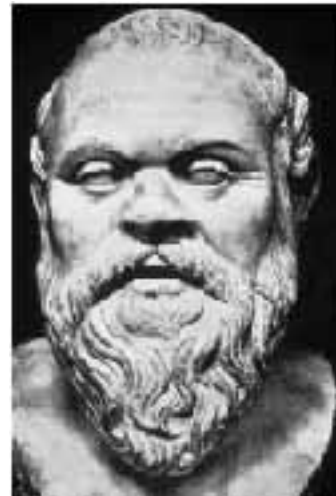
**Literature:** The contribution of ancient Greece to literature is a great gift to the human race. Homer's famous epic 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' is still famous specimen of the great works of literature. They achieved the highest success in literature especially in the genre of drama. The Greeks were particularly experts in tragedy. Aeschylus is known as the father of tragedy. His famous drama was Prometheus Bound. However the greatest dramatist in Greek civilization was Sophocles. He has written over a hundred dramas. Among his famous plays the most popular ones are King Oedipus, Antigone and Electra. Another famous dramatist was Euripides. Aristophanes, a comic playwright, defines and shapes the idea of comedy and satire. The Greeks also showed a lot of expertise in writing chronicles. Chronicles and history writing started during this time. Herodotus was the father of History. The first history book of Herodotus was written on the war between Persia and Greece. Thucydides was the father of scientific history. His famous book was The Peloponnesian War.

**Religion:** The Greeks had twelve Gods and Goddesses. They worshiped natural forces and also famous warriors. Zeus was the father of the Gods. Apollo was the sun God, Poseidon was the sea God. Athena was the Goddess of the knowledge. Among the twelve

Gods and Goddesses these four were the principle ones. The priests looked over the religious matters by order of the government. People from different city-states gathered together and worshiped the sun God Apollo in his famous temple of Delphi in Delos.

**Philosophy:** Greece made a significant contribution to the field of philosophy. Philosophy emerged as the Greeks searched for answers to the questions about the origin of the universe, how the change is taking place in the world etc. Thales was one of the earlier philosophers. He was the first to explain the reason for eclipse of the sun. After him didactic philosophy was introduced in Greece. This sort of philosophers was known as the Sophists. They believed that there was no absolute truth in this world. Pericles was a follower of this branch of philosophers. Socrates was the most famous among these philosophers. The main goal of his philosophy was to create an ideal state and an ideal citizen. His teaching included speaking out against tyranny. Plato, the famous student of Socrates took Greek philosophy to a peak of popularity. Aristotle, Plato's student was also a very famous philosopher of the time.

**Science:** The Greeks first started practicing science in 600 B.C. The Greek scientists were among the first to draw the map of the world. They were the first to prove that the world is one of the planets in the universe and it is revolving in its own orbit. The Greek astrologers were also able to explain the reason behind the sun and moon eclipse. They were also the ones to first identify that the moon does not have any light of its own and that the lightening and the thunder was not a result of Zeus's anger but it was a natural cause and effect. Euclid, a geometrician was an expert in physics. The famous mathematicians Pythagoras, physician Hippocrates were also the gifts of this civilization.



Pic : Socrates

**Architecture and Sculpture:** Greek civilization was well developed in architecture and sculpting. The evidence of the excellence of the Greek art can be found in the carvings and designs on the earthen wares. There is much evidence spread around Greece of the specimen of Greek architecture. They built large palaces on tall pillars and the pillars had beautiful, detailed sculpting on them. One of the greatest examples of the excellence of Greek architecture is the temple of Athena the Parthenon. In Athens one can still find the beautiful works of Greek architecture in the ruins of acropolis.

The Greek sculpture has given the birth to a golden era in the world of art. The famous sculptors of the time were, Myron, Phidias and Praxiteles.

**Games:** The Greeks paid special attention to the games of the children. They had their initiations in games in the schools. The Greeks had tremendous interest in physical training and sports. In different festivals the Greeks arranged sports competitions. Among them the most popular competition was the one they did in honor of Zeus.

The most popular sports men in Greece took part in were the Olympics. In the Olympics they organized sports like race, wrestling, throwing spear, boxing etc. The winners were congratulated with garland of olive branch and leaves. The Olympics was held every four years. It was a very prestigious competition and sportsmen coming from other city states would come to Athens to take part in it. Olympics were renowned for creating a brotherly bond between the participants coming from other city states.

**Individual Work:** Create a list of famous scholars of Greek Civilization.

### **Roman Civilization:**

**Background:** Before the decline of the Greek civilization, another great empire and civilization emerged on the banks of the Tiber River in Italy. This civilization was known as the Roman civilization as it centered around the city of Rome. In the earlier days Rome was under the rule of one king. There was also a senate and a council. In 510 B.C, when the king became a tyrant he was dethroned and a republic was established. The Roman civilization sustained for nearly 600 years.

**Geographic Location and Time Frame:** Rome is situated in western part of central Italy. Italy is a country of the European continent that expanded from the Mediterranean in the south of Italy to the Alps in the north. The Adriatic Sea is between Italy and Yugoslavia. On the beaches of the Adriatic Sea, in the north-eastern side of Italy is the ancient sea port, Adria. The Mediterranean is also in the western side of Italy. This part of the sea was known in the ancient times as the Etruscan sea. Rome was an agriculture based city because of its favorable agricultural conditions. As a result of this the frequent conflict between the inhabitants and the invaders were a common scene in Rome. These conflicts turned the Roman nation into expert soldiers.

If we analyze the history of Rome we will see that through all the ups and downs, the conflict and struggle eventually Rome was established in 753 B.C. In 476 B.C the Roman nation finally saw its end in the hands of the barbarous German nations.

**Rome and the Roman rule:** The city of Rome is situated on the top of seven mountains, twelve to thirteen miles away from the origin spot of the river Tiber, which is a very significant geographical spot. And so this city is known as the city of seven mountains. In 2000 B.C a group of people who belonged to the Indo-European family started to live in Italy. They were the Latinos. Their language 'Latin' is named after them as well. The Latin King Romulus founded the city of Rome. The city is named after him.

Rome did not become a democratic country in a day. Step by step, through many struggle and conflict Rome came to be a democratic state. The historians divided Rome into particular phases. For example, from 753-510 B.C was called the period of kingdom. In this period seven kings ruled over the country. In this period the last emperor Tarquinius supercus was overthrown and the republican began. The republican system sustained from 500 B.C to 60 B.C. As the Republican system emerged, the people of Rome nominated their revolutionary leader Brutus and another man as representatives of the state. After the fall of the Monarchy the people of the state were divided into two groups. They were the Patricians, who were the aristocrats and the plebeians, who were the citizen commoners. Small farmers, craftsman, traders were members of the plebeian group.

**Individual Work:** Make a list of the rivers, seas and mountains that were used to describe the Roman civilization and point to the places they are situated in a map.

In the first two hundred years of the republican state was the history of warfare between the patricians and the plebeians. The plebeians were the deprived group. They continually revolted for their rights. Over time, the laws that gave patricians exclusive rights to Rome's highest offices were repealed or weakened, and a new aristocracy emerged from among the plebeian class. In 450 B.C the Plebeians wrote 12 laws on a bronze plate. As a final victory of the revolution one member from the two plebeian counselors were selected to stand for election. Thus the Roman Republic headed for a democratic transformation.

Although Rome was a republican state, it gradually emerged as an imperialist power. In a very short time Rome was able to create dominance over entire Italy. From 146 B.C to 46 B.C the Roman Empire

underwent a Dark Age. Rome became agitated and conflicted with the frequent power struggle between rich and poor, revolutions of the slaves and violence and bloodshed for power.

The Roman economy depended on the slaves. The slaves were no longer able to tolerate the inhuman torture on them and announced mutiny under the leadership of Spartacus. They were able to continue their revolt for two years. After the murder of Spartacus in 71 B.C the mutiny finally came to an end. Insufferable torture and misery came down upon the slaves.

Apart from the internal conflict Rome became involved in a bloody war. As a result the ambitious generals took over the power and civil war spread in the entire country. At one stage of the power struggle three captains came to power in a mutual understanding. The large Roman Empire was divided into three parts and the three generals: Octavius Caesar, Mark Anthony and Lepidus took over the rule which was known as the triumvirate. Lepidus was the ruler of the African Provinces; Octavius Caesar was ruler of the Italian Empire and the western part of Italy and Anthony was the ruler of the eastern part of the country. However, the triumvirate did not work for long, because the three had the ambition to become the one and only ruler of the Roman Empire. Consequently, in a short time the power struggle began again. Octavian Caesar defeated Lepidus, and Mark Anthony increased his force by marrying the princess of Egypt Cleopatra. But in the end he was defeated by Octavius Caesar in the power struggle. Octavius Caesar came to power and took the name Augustus Caesar. He is known in history by this very name. Augustus Caesar died in 14 AD. The most significant incident of his time is the birth of Jesus Christ. After the death of Augustus Caesar, Rome again fell into conflict and chaos. The foreign invasion particularly the frequent attacks of the Germanic tribes were become more and more catastrophic. Apart from that the internal conflict in Rome gradually weakened the entire country. Rome finally fell in 476 B.C as the last Roman emperor Romulus Augustulus failed to defend the empire from the attack of the barbarous Germanic tribes. In the mean time Christianity prospered and the Germanic tribes emerged.

**Contribution of Rome to Civilization:** Rome was influenced by the Greeks in art, literature, philosophy and architecture. They have imitated and followed the Greeks in these aspects. However, they achieved superiority over the Greeks and other nations in the fields of military organizations, administrations, law and engineering. The modern world is truly indebted to the Romans for their contribution in these fields.

**Education, Literature and Writing system:** Education in the Roman times meant sports and the remembering of the past glory of the heroes. Rome began its journey through warfare. So everything in their lives evolved around war. The high class Romans took it as a fashion to learn Greek. As a result many Romans became experts in translating Greek literature into Latin. The aristocratic youths of Roman Empire took education from famous institutes in Greece.

**Group Work:** Write in the chart the names of the places each of the three emperors of the triumvirate were in charge of.

Name of the Emperor	Rulling places
1.	
2.	
3.	

Pelotas and Terence were the famous names who contribute in literature. They both left great marks in composing comedies of the time. The greatest achievement in literature was found in the times of Augustus Caesar. Horace and poet Virgil were very popular in those times. Virgil's famous work Aeneid is still the one of the best translated works of the world. Ovid and Lei vie were famous poets of the time. Lie vie was also a famous historian. The historic Tacitus was born in this time.

**Architecture, Sculpture and Science:** One of the most significant characteristics of the Roman architecture is its enormity. The temple 'Pantheon' made by emperor Hardin is one of the astonishing examples of Roman architecture. In the 80 AD the Roman emperor Titus built the Coliseum, a theater that could house 5600 spectators at a time. The art of sculpting also flourished beside the blooming field of architecture. The sculptors of Rome created figures and sculptures of Gods and Goddesses, emperors and many mythical characters out of marble.



Pic : Coliseum

Although the Romans have not been able to leave significant contribution to the field of science, some of the scientists have left their mark in this field. Among them Pliny gave us an Encyclopedia of science. In this encyclopedia nearly 500 scientists' works have been included. The Romans have also contributed in the field of medicine. Salsas, a famous scientist wrote a book on medicine. Gallon Rufus has also contributed significantly in the medical science.

**Religion, Philosophy and Law:** The Romans were influenced by the Greeks in the field of religion. Many of the Greek Gods and Goddesses have been adapted to the Roman culture with a different name. The principle God for the Romans was Jupiter. Other important Gods and Goddesses are: Juno, Neptune, Mars, Vulcan, Venus, Minerva, Bacchus etc. The Chief Priest of the temples oversaw the religious rituals. But the Romans did not believe in the afterlife. From the time of Augustus Caesar the custom of worshiping the emperor as the supreme God began. It is noteworthy that during this time the messiah of the Christian religion Jesus Christ was born. In the later years Christianity spread side by side of the Roman religion. Many Romans converted into Christianity. The Roman emperor was furious at this popularity of the new religion, because according to the Christian sacrament the emperor could not be worshiped as equal to God. In consequence the Roman emperors put a ban to the preaching of the new religion and inflicted torture on the converted Romans. However Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and made Christianity the official religion of the state.

Many people believe that the Roman philosophy is influenced by the Greek philosophy. However, Cicero and Lucretius have been able to give many well established concepts and ideas in Roman Philosophy (98 B.C.-55 A.D.). In Rome the Philosophical trend of Stoicism was very popular. In 140 B.C. Pontius in the island of Rhodes first started this trend of philosophy.

In the world civilization the most significant and important contribution of the Romans was its law. In the mid 5th century B.C. the Romans were able to formulate together the criminal and civil law. Emperor Justinian in 540 B.C. wrote these laws in 12 bronze plates and these plates were hung in public for the people to see. According to the Roman law all men are equal. The Roman law is divided into three sections. They are:

**1. Civil Law:** This law was obligatory for the Roman people. This law was both written and unwritten forms.

**2. People's Law :** This law was applicable for all the citizens of the nation. This law also included the protection of individual rights. This law acknowledged the slave system. Cicero was the legislator of this law.

**3. Natural Law:** This law talks about the basic rights of the citizens.

The contribution of Romans in legislating law will forever be remembered. The modern world relies heavily on the Roman laws. In the 6th century B.C. Justinian first compiled all the Roman laws and legislatures in one place.

## Exercise

### Multiple Choice Questions:

1. How many consonant letters did the Egyptians invent:
  - a. 23
  - b. 24
  - c. 25
  - d. 26
2. Why was religion so important for the Egyptians?
  - a. Egyptians were influenced by religion in every spare ;
  - b. The Aristocratic society gave importance to religion;
  - c. Priests ruled the country
  - d. The Egyptians believed in religion

### Read the following passage and answer the question number 3 and 4:

Sima and her family were overwhelmed watching the performance different countries in the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games. Sima saw the program and remembered of a civilization. She thought of organizing a cultural ceremony in her school and took inspiration from the show.

3. What civilization did Sima remember?
  - a. Roman
  - b. Greek
  - c. Chinese
  - d. Sindh
4. By this sort of programs \_\_\_\_\_ among nations concrete:
  - i. Unity of economy
  - ii. Exchange of cultural views
  - iii. Political tolerance

Which of the following is correct?

- a. i
- b. ii
- c. iii
- d. i,ii,iii

### Creative Questions:

Rahim is a farmer. He cleaned the weeds and jungles in the slop of a small hill and started cultivating. Although he was not successful in the beginning, he kept up the hard work with his fellow farmers. Within a few years farmer Rahim got good crop in return of his hard work and his situation improved. Rahim and other farmers cut the hills and made it plain and started farming. They established concrete houses, factories, mosques and schools.

- a. Which Emperor established the Rome city?
- b. Why was the triumvirate rule fail in Rome? Describe.
- c. What characteristic of Egypt is reflected in the behaviors of farmer Rahim and his fellow farmers?
- d. Do you think the architecture of the region of farmer Rahim and architect of the ancient Egypt has any similarity? Give your opinion.

## The End

**2013**

**Academic Year**

**9-10 History**

দারিদ্র্যমুক্ত বাংলাদেশ গড়তে হলে শিক্ষা গ্রহণ করতে হবে

– মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা

মুক্তিযোদ্ধারা দেশের শ্রেষ্ঠ সন্তান



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