

## **SIX POINTS MOVEMENT OF BANGABANDHU SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN**

The Bengali independence movement and the establishment of the nation-state started with the Biannar language movement. After the division of the country based on racialism, Bengalis realize that this country is not mine, and this freedom is not mine. No society or nation-state can be established based on religion.

West Pakistanis continue to be oppressed, oppressed, and deprived by the regime every day. The people of this Bengali valley continued to fight for self-respect and self-determination against the exploitation and deprivation of West Pakistan. However, the anti-Pakistan movement turned to the question of independence mainly through the raising of 6-point demands in 1966.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman raised the 6-point demand for Bengali liberation charter in Lahore. But some progressive left politicians of the time called ETA a CIA document. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman became the undisputed leader of the Bengali nationalist movement through the 1979 mass uprising and established the 6-point Bengali Liberation Charter. And that's when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's political foresight became clear to everyone.

The day was 7 June 1966. This day in the history of the freedom struggle of the Bengali nation is a day of glorious struggle in a unique self-sacrifice protest. On May 13, 1966, in a public meeting organized by the Awami League in Paltan, the program of the June 7 strike was announced. A comprehensive program was undertaken in the 6-point campaign throughout June.

On June 7, Manu Mia, a Bengal Beverage worker, was shot dead in Tejgaon during the strike. This increased the intensity of the protest. The train to Tejgaon stopped. Azad Enamel Aluminum factory worker Abul Hossain was martyred in EPR firing. On the same day, six workers were martyred by police firing near Narayanganj railway station. Dhaka-Narayanganj goes beyond the control of the government. An evening curfew was imposed. Thousands of protesters were arrested. In many places, the mob overtook the arrested. The 6-point movement spread across the country. A new dimension of movement is added to the blood of martyrs. Leaders and activists of the Awami League and Chhatra League spread to the field to organize the laborers, farmers, and masses of the country.

On February 5, 1966, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman presented his historic 6-point demand at the National Conference of Opposition Parties in Lahore. From 1966 to 1969, the 6-point movement led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the focal point of all political activities in the country. One of the most glorious chapters of the political life of the imprisoned Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the leadership of the 6-point movement, which established him as the sole and unrivaled hero of the liberation of the Bengali nation through the mass uprising of 1969. At the height of the movement, the student community anointed Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as 'Bangabandhu' on behalf of the Bengali nation, and the Bengali nation happily adopted the title of Bangabandhu, the great hero of liberation, without hesitation.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman raised the 6-point demand at the national conference of opposition parties in Lahore. They were as follows:

**Proposition-1: Constitutional Structure and Nature of the State:** The constitutional structure of the country should be such that Pakistan would be a federated state based on the Lahore Resolution. The government will be parliamentary type. The power of the Legislative Council shall be sovereign and this Council shall also be elected by direct popular vote based on universal suffrage.

**Proposition-2: Powers of the Central Government:** The powers of the Central (Federal) Government shall be limited to only two areas namely, national defense and foreign policy. In all other matters the powers of the Member States shall be absolute.

**Proposition-3: Currency or Monetary Powers:** Regarding currency, either of the following two propositions can be adopted: (a) Two separate but freely exchangeable currencies for the entire country. or (b) there may be only one currency in force for the whole country under the existing rules. But in that case, an effective system should be put in place in the governance system, so that the route of capital smuggling from East Pakistan to West Pakistan is closed. In this case, a separate banking reserve for East Pakistan should also be established and a separate fiscal or monetary policy should be introduced for East Pakistan.

**Proposition-4: Powers relating to revenue, taxes, or duties:** The states of the federation shall have sovereign power to levy taxes or duties. The Central Government shall have no power to levy any taxes. However, a portion of the state revenue will be available to the central government for meeting the necessary expenditure. The central government's fund will consist of the same percentage of all types of taxes collected by the states.

**Proposition 5: Powers on Foreign Trade:** (a) Separate accounts of the foreign trade of each state in the federation shall be maintained. (b) Foreign exchange earned through foreign trade shall be under the jurisdiction of the States. (c) The foreign exchange requirements of the Center shall be met by the Member States at the same rate or any rate agreed upon. (d) There shall be no customs or tax restrictions on the movement of goods between Member States. (e) The regime should empower member states to send their trade representatives abroad and enter into trade agreements in their interest.

**Proposition 6: Power to form regional armies:** To protect regional unity and governance, member states should be empowered to form and maintain paramilitary or regional armies under their jurisdiction.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was able to correctly understand the direction of the blood-stained streets of Manu Mia and other martyrs in the historic June 7 movement and instructed his devoted Awami League and Chhatra League leaders to reach the final stage of the 6-point movement. As a result, the freed Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was awarded the title of 'Bangabandhu' by the nation, under the legal framework (LFO) announced by the Pakistani junta. By participating in the election, the Awami League won a single and absolute majority in the boat symbol. Later, the Pakistani military junta convened a parliamentary session and resorted to various tricks to transfer power. Through this ruse, the West Pakistani military junta trampled on the people's verdict and started running a steamroller of oppression on the Bengalis to protect the integral Pakistan. East Pakistan became a conflagration. Bangabandhu's close colleagues and the East Pakistan Chhatra League took the struggle to establish an independent Bengali homeland as the final preparations for the independence movement, that is, the Bengali independence struggle.

On March 2, the flag of independent Bangladesh was hoisted at the Battala of Dhaka University. Declaration of Independence was announced in the presence of Bangabandhu on March 3. Bangabandhu approved the national anthem 'Amar Sonar Bangla I Love You'. At the historic race course, Bangabandhu thunderously announced 'This time's struggle is our liberation struggle, this time's struggle is our freedom struggle'. The preparations for the liberation war began in the outline of the liberation war. On the night of March 25, through Operation Searchlight, the Pakistani military junta pounced on unarmed Bengalis and killed thousands of innocent Bengalis, starting a dark chapter in history. Awami League leader MA Hannan announced the final declaration of independence announced by Bangabandhu from Chittagong.

Historical June 7 is important in the life of the Bengali nation because the prerequisite for any movement or struggle to be victorious is that until the streets are heated and stained with the blood of martyrs, no movement has succeeded in the history of the world and no nation has gained independence.

The basic aspiration of our freedom movement was the establishment of a democratic non-communal exploitation-free, non-discriminatory, progressive humanistic nation-state. We have moved away from that path. Due to the military intervention in democratic politics in our country, we have achieved nominal democracy. Still, we have not been able to move forward with the institutional framework and democratic ideals compatible with democracy. We have not been able to build democratic institutions. Due to this, our elections are repeatedly questioned and the pillars of other states are attacked. Now when the 7th of June is celebrated, it can be seen in this tradition of the 7th of June that this time developed countries like America, the United Kingdom, China, Spain, and Italy are almost in crisis. Small states are also affected, and our neighbor India is also greatly affected. Corona is hitting us too! The economic system may collapse, and all social values and systems may collapse!

Standing in this situation, if we have to move the new world forward, if we think about the spirit of our liberation war or think about the sacrifice of the martyrs of June 7, then we cannot deal with the current situation with cynicism, bigotry, or egoism. All those who have the power of thinking and consciousness of the side of the liberation war, who have progressive power, must think about the future of the future, about the world of the future. Not only the country but we also have to think about the future. Therefore, on June 7 this year, let us all move forward towards the struggle for a society free from the exploitation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib's thoughts.

### **Significance of the Six-point Movement in Bangladesh History**

The six-point demand marks a unique and important change of course in the annals of our history and thus is a milestone event in Bangladesh.

It was a movement in the then East Pakistan, spearheaded by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, which called for greater autonomy for East Pakistan. The movement's main agenda was to realize the six demands put forward by a coalition of Bengali nationalist political parties in 1966, to end the exploitation of East Pakistan by the West Pakistani rulers. It is considered a turning point on the road to Bangladesh's independence.

Following the partition of India, the new state of Pakistan came into being. The inhabitants of East Pakistan (later Bangladesh) made up the majority of its population, and exports from East Pakistan (such as jute, etc.) were the majority of Pakistan's export income. However, East Pakistanis did not have a proportional share of political power and economic benefits within Pakistan.

East Pakistan was facing a critical situation after being subjected to continuous discrimination on a regional basis, year after year. As a result, the economists, intelligentsia, and the politicians of East Pakistan started to raise questions about this discrimination, giving rise to the historic six-point movement.

#### **The historical six points are noted as being:**

1. The Constitution should provide for a Federation of Pakistan in its true sense based on the Lahore Resolution, and the parliamentary form of government with supremacy of a Legislature directly elected based on universal adult franchise.
2. The federal government should deal with only two subjects: Defence and Foreign Affairs, and all other residual subjects should 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 Pakistan to West Pakistan. Furthermore, a separate Banking Reserve should be established and separate fiscal and monetary policies should be adopted for East Pakistan.

4. The power of taxation and revenue collection should be vested in the federating units and the federal center would have no such power. The federation would be entitled to a share in the state taxes to meet its expenditures.

5. 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; indigenous products should move free of duty between the two wings, and the constitution should empower the units to establish trade links with foreign countries.

6. East Pakistan should have a separate military or paramilitary force, and Navy headquarters should be in East Pakistan.

The proposal was rejected by politicians from West Pakistan and non-Awami League politicians from East Pakistan. It was rejected by the President of All Pakistan Awami League Nawabzada Nasarullah Khan. It was also rejected by the National Awami Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, and Nezam-e-Islam. However, the movement had strong support from the population of then-East Pakistan.

Mujib, who would not become Bangabandhu till three years later, had been placed in detention under the Defence of Pakistan Rules on 8 May 1966. The reason was not hard to understand: Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan, made clear his opinion on the Six Points. He told the country that the purveyors of the Six Points would be dealt with in the language of weapons.

Ayub Khan was not the only individual who spotted a threat to Pakistan's unity should the Six Points be acknowledged. His soon-to-be-out foreign minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto challenged Mujib early in the year to a public debate at Dhaka's Paltan Maidan on the Six Points. It was Tajuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh's first Prime Minister who accepted the challenge on Mujib's behalf. In the event, Bhutto did not turn up.

The leaders of the opposition parties of West Pakistan convened a national convention at Lahore on 6 February 1966 to ascertain the post-Tashkent political trend. Bangabandhu reached Lahore on 4 February along with the top leaders of Awami League, and the day following, he placed the Six-point charter of demand before the subject committee as the demands of the people of East Pakistan. He created pressure to include his proposal in the agenda of the conference. The subject committee rejected the proposal of Bangabandhu.

On the day following, the newspapers of West Pakistan published reports on the Six-point Programme, and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was projected as a separatist. Consequently, Sheikh Mujib abandoned the conference. The Six-point Programme along with a proposal of movement for the realisation of the demands was placed before the meeting of the working committee of Awami League on 21 February 1966, and the proposal was carried out unanimously.

**Why the Six-Point Program is called– “The Charter of Freedom to the Bengali Nation”?**

From 1947 to 1971, a historic period for East Pakistan was a time that witnessed many painful events taking place in this region.

The points were clear, easy to understand, and most importantly were true resemblance the feelings of the Bengalis. It was for the first time that Bengalis shouted, asking for their economic and political rights and national security. But the response from the West Pakistan was rather painful and humiliating. It was an event that confirmed the reality that East Pakistan was a colony of West Pakistan.

7 June 1966 is a red-letter day in the history of freedom movements of the people of Bangladesh. It was on this historic day that the struggling people of this country took a firm and solemn vow to achieve their self-determination under the able and dynamic leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Hence, the day has great political significance. It was, once again on this day, that blood flowed out of the veins of our people as they demanded their self-rule through the famous Charter of Six-point Demands of Bangabandhu which ultimately became the Magna Carta of all movements that emanated from the soil of Bangladesh. So, the importance and significance of this historic day can hardly be over-emphasized.

If we trace the history of our freedom struggle which started long back, we will observe that Bangabandhu as a part of his long-term plan to take his people gradually and systematically to the ultimate path of emancipation gave his historic Six-point Programme to the nation at a national conference of leaders of the then all political parties at Lahore on February 16, 1966. This program of Bangabandhu had upset the Islamabad ruling clique with all the schemes of exploitation planned and raised a violent storm in the political arena of then Pakistan.

The erstwhile Pakistan Government tried its best to suppress the demand for self-determination raised by seventy-five million people of that time, as was laid down in the Magna Carta of Bangabandhu. As a result of the Six-point Programme, Bangabandhu was put behind bars on May 8, 1966, along with his other followers. The arrest of Bangabandhu and his followers was vehemently resented by the people, and the whole of Bangladesh protested like one entity by holding meetings, rallies, and processions that rocked the distant capital at Rawalpindi.

On May 20, the Awami League Working Committee decided to organize a protest meeting on June 7, 1966, by condemning repression and demanding the release of Bangabandhu and other leaders and thus came the observance of the strike on 7 June. The day dawned with factories remaining closed, transport off the roads and business houses shut down. This was the way people tried to express their indignation against the oppressors and resolute support for the leadership of Bangabandhu.

People came out to the streets closing their establishments, offices, and shops. They suspended all their normal activities. Dhaka became the city of processions and slogans. The workers and students brought out peaceful processions. But the regime of exploiters could not tolerate slogan-chanting people who had made a sacred vow to realize their right to self-determination and so the ruling clique responded with the language of weapons killing scores of people including Monu Mia in Dhaka and Narayanganj. Thus, the people of Bangladesh raised their slogans for independence by shedding blood.

The song did not end here; the melody lingered on...Every glory has a price to pay. The Bengalis had to pay a high price for their freedom. But the great Liberation War brought the nation together. It was the moment of truth for the Bengalis when they all united to join hands to fight the Pakistani aggressors. In the eyes of the Pakistani forces, they were no longer just little brown people; instead, they fought back and got their victory.

At long last, Bangladesh took birth on 16 December 1971 after a bloody war with Pakistan's savage military rulers.

Such a big man was Bangabandhu, and he became the undisputed Father of independent Bangladesh. To be unaware of this is sheer ignorance. To deny this is an offense against history. And this is the pride and glory and the spirit of our glorious Liberation War with Pakistan.

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