Also from AHDPH

Decentralization in Bangladesh: Myth or Reality?
Mohammad Mohabbat Khan

Bureaucracy and Local Politics in Bangladesh
A Study in Roles and Relationships
Nizam Ahmed

The Nature of Legitimacy and the Crisis of Bangladesh Politics
Dr Rashida Khanam

Politics and Development of the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh
Bhuiyan Md. Monowar Kabir

Administrative Culture in Bangladesh
Ishtiaq Jamil

The Bureaucratic Ascendancy
Habib Zafarullah & Mohammad Mohabbat Khan

Local Government: Local Peoples Institution
Bishawjit Mallick

Tipaimukh and Beyond
Nazmul Alam & M. Abul Kashem Mozumder

কূটনীতিকোষ
মোঃ শামীম আহসান

বাংলাদেশ সচিত্র সংসদ
মোঃ আইনুল হোসেন

অভিনব সরকার ব্যতিক্রমি নির্বাচন
মুহাম্মদ ইয়াহ্ইয়া আখতার

সরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে দুর্নীতি
মুহাম্মদ ইয়াহ্ইয়া আখতার

রাজনীতির জানা কাহিনী না বলা কথা
আনিসুর রহমান

গণতন্ত্রের জামা বহুবর্ণে চিত্রিত
মাহমুদ শফিক

ISBN : 978-984-90140-0-3

A. K. Fazlul Huq, Suhrawardy And Moulana Bhashani
An Intimate Study Of Politicians And Inside Stories
Kazi Ahmed Kamal
AHDPH





A. K. Fazlul Huq, Suhrawardy And Moulana Bhashani

An Intimate Study of Politicians and Inside Stories

Kazi Ahmed Kamal

AHDPH
A H Development Publishing House

A. K Fazlul Huq, Suhrawardy And Moulana Bhashani

AN INTIMATE STUDY OF POLITICIANS AND INSIDE STORIES

Kazi Ahmed Kamal
Barrister-at-law
Former Bangladesh Ambassador

A H Development Publishing House

Publisher
Md. Aynul Hossain
A H Development Publishing House
143, New Market, Dhaka -1205
Cell: 01715022927
E-mail: ahdphbd@gmail.com
Web: www.ahdphbook.com

Copyright © Kazi Tarik Ahmed

First Published: 1970
First Revised Edition,: 2012
Cover Designed: Abdus Salam Khokon

Distributor in India
Paragon Enterprise
1, Meher Ali Road (1st Floor)
Kolkata- 700 017 (India)
Tel: 0091-2280- 28924 -25

Printer: Metropolitan Printers & Publishers

AHDPH Cataloguing-in-Publishing Data
Kazi Ahmed Kamal, Barrister-al-law
Politicians and Inside Stories: an intimate study mainly of Fazlul Huq, Suhrawrdy and Moulana Bhashani/by Kazi Ahmed Kamal, Barrister-al-law

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN: 987 984901400 3

1. Politician 2. Inside Stories 3. Intimate study mainly
. I. Title
001.4 /Kak – dc22

All rights reserved by the publisher. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher, AHDPH.

Dedicated

To

My wife Lulu Bilquis Banu

Table of Content

Content	Page
Introduction	Vii
A.K. Fazlul Huq	1-40
Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy	41-90
Khawja Nazimuddin	91-118
Moulana Bhashani	119-155
Bogra Mohammad Ali	157-182

INTRODUCTION

It is a man to man survey of the lives of five politicians. These leaders dominated politics of our country for decades and shaped its destiny according to their light. One of them is still living and is likely to play his role in the ensuing political events.

While probing into their lives I found two leaders, Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy towering unmistakably much high above rest of them. It would have been better if I could afford a separate treatment of their lives since the range and quality of their lives is far superior and edifying. Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy are not only great but they are heroes.

What makes them heroes? Even a great man, a great leader, some one supremely good, brave and wise does not make a hero. As an English biographer, Rosemary Sutcliff has said the hero develops a special kind of magnetism; anecdotes gather around him. Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy are indeed heroes, splendid and magnetic; around whom plenty of anecdotes have already gathered.

The rest of them are men of ordinary talents. They are not much different from rest of the people having in the lower rung. Their only attributes that separate them are the ambition, will and industry with which they pursue their aims to reach the summit of power. Thrust for power is the basic ingredient of their political motive and action.

Every man has his own wisdom and folly, his strength and weaknesses, his passions and contradictions. To judge him in proper perspective, one should see the totality of his life. The life studies of those who are living will naturally be incomplete since their lives contain immense possibilities which we can not at this stage measure or predict. As Sophocles has said, "A man can not be judged till his death as a day cannot be judged unless it has reached evening."

Through their lives are strung important political events which I believe are part of our history. It is, therefore, hoped that the

following pages shall be of interest from the historical point of view no les than the biographical studies.

Leaders are too important to be treated as symptoms of the past. I believe the leaders such. Jinnah, Kemal Ataturk or Churchill or Hitler had decisive role to play in the destiny of the nation either for good or evil. While surveying the political events of any country I believe it is the leaders whose personalities impinge upon events, guide and shape the destiny of a nation. A peep, therefore, into their thoughts and moods, their pride and prejudices will probably explain many inexplicable events of the times.

Sometime intimate details have been recorded. All these trivial addenda lend a sense of humanity to the men who made history. Sometime I have recorded their personal lives and their reactions. Some readers are not prone to the studies of this sort and naturally they react disapprovingly. Such readers seem to forget that through their personal lives we get a foretaste of their actions in the wider sphere. After all life is indivisible. We do not have separate compartment in our mind or heart.

Our biographers while dilating on the lives of their subjects only confine themselves to their good deeds and made their heroes so virtuous, so faultless and so perfect that they become dehumanized beings. They become almost robots or mechanical men with good qualities and virtues packed in their characters. This uncritical praise is called by the French, a disease of admiration.

Such has not been my aim. I believe a human being however great he may be, has his own weaknesses, vices and contradictions. If side by side with his greatness and virtues all these deficiencies are recorded the man is not belittled or humbled, he is made a human being and what he is. Any other treatment of the men under studies would have been a monotony of praise, unreal and insipid.

"Paint me as I am," said Oliver Cromwell to his painter "If you leave out the scars and wrinkles, I will not pay you a shilling" That is surely a display of goodsense and magnanimity.

If a writer finds the vices and whims as unbelievable or only an aberration not worth recording, he is not a true biographer. As Lytton Strachey, an eminent biographer has said, "It is not his business to lay bare the facts of the case as he understands them."

I always wondered what the mainspring in their success was. After studying their thoughts and deeds I spotlight here the dominant elements in their lives which ensured their success as well as failure. Fazlul Huq emerged as a people's leader, a loving man and a great humanist. Suhrawardy's life was a ceaseless struggle for the survival of democracy and as an opposition leader, he was at his best.

It is embarrassing to point out the folly and unwisdom of Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy since they are heroes and adored by millions of people. But yet I believe they should be known with all their virtues and vices since the next generations should not be burdened with a distorted view of history.

Nazimuddin drew his prestige from the Ahsan Manzil and his loyalty to his political bosses prodded him to power. Bogra Mohammad Ali's success in life was an accident of history and his amiable disposition sustained him in power and position for a while. Moulana Bhashani survives in politics by directing his anger and passions against the men in power and rouses the have-nots against the haves.

It is my curiosity to know why some men without any apparent talent or sacrifice rise to an height which was not foreseeable in the beginning either by themselves or the countrymen. I was intrigued by them. Their success fascinated me. Strangely enough all of them thought they were always right in what they did. They believe their failure or infamy if any had been due to conspiracy of their political foes. Their egoism reigns supreme and some of the decisions which left the country in agony were the result of their inflated ego or morbid manifestation of their mind, twisted by jealousy or rivalry.

Biographers have unfair advantage over the men who live amid events. I have constantly borne this in my mind while dilating on the character and contribution of the men who moulded the pattern of history. Even men like Bogra Mohammad Ali, Ghulam Mohammad or Iskandar Mirza were undoubtedly patriots who wished their country great and along with it to find themselves also great and powerful. Test of greatness of a leader comes when his personal ambition clashes with the duties of the state. So long as the wellbeing of the country runs parallel to the ambitions of these men, they are great and honourable leaders. If not, they mostly fall behind and recede into history as men of mean and despicable character,.

This book is the result of four years of my labour. I tried to go through all the available books on Pakistan in search of materials

needed for this book. As is obvious, the books did not provide any worth while glimpse into the lives of the politicians under study. I had to interview people of various stations of life –people who had been associated with these politicians. They range from the former central ministers and ambassadors to their friends, relatives and private secretaries and others. I record my deep obligation to them for the help they have provided. As they are too numerous I can not afford to convey my thanks separately.

In a work of this sort it is only natural that in accuracies will appear. I shall therefore request the readers to point out any inaccuracy or misstatement that may appear so that I can correct the same in the next edition.

I am grateful to Dr. Aleem-ul-Razee, Ph.D (Law), Ph.D (Hist.) Barrister-at-Law for the encouragement he has given me in writing this book. Dr. Razee, I must say with appreciation, has not tried to influence my views and comments on the politicians. I must also record my thanks to Mr. M. A. Razzaq, Director, Afro-Asian publications Ltd. I, New Burlington street, London, W.I. who had been kind to read the manuscript and suggest certain modifications, which I acknowledge gratefully.

I am thankful to my younger brothers, Dr. Kazi Kamrul Hassan and Kazi Mohammad Ali Jinna, M.A (History), for compiling some biographical data. I must also thank Mr. Ashraf Ali who had taken pains to decipher my hand writing and type and retype the whole manuscript.

If any source of offence is discernible in the pages of this book or if I caused any injury to the sensibility of any person, it has been done without any intent or motive.

Kazi Ahmed Kamal

Plot no. 27, Road No. 39,
Gulshan, Dhaka.

The highest duty of the writer.....is to maintain true to himself and let the chips fall where they may.....min serving the vision of his truth the artist best serves the nation.

President John F. Kennedy

A. K. FAZLUL HUQ
(1873-1962)

Fazlul Huq was a hero, a leader of the leaders, prodigious, brilliant and volatile, at times inconsistent but above all most human and lovable. His image is all embracing and is larger than life. If Fazlul Huq's political flaw was unpredictability and impulsiveness, his strength was human Bengalee per excellence. His very face and complexion looked like that. He summarized in himself what is best and natural in a bengalee character. But the pendulum swung wider for him than it did for most people.

A person of great natural ability, sincere, humane and well meaning, close to the soil he became the undisputed leader of Muslim Bengal. Fazlul Huq's knack of getting on well with both rich and poor, with miserable and hungry peasants as well as the middle class was a remarkable character. The masses adored him because he knew them and strove hard to liberate them from mostly Hindu *Zamindars* (landlords) and money lending class. The middle class adored him too because he had provided them with jobs, established schools, colleges and brought opportunities of life.

By using both, he built an irresistible machine of popularity. He was an unchallengable vote- getter. The unrivalled leadership which he built up for himself seemed to disperse by the unexpected rise of Jinnah and the Muslim League. Fazlul Haq understood people more than power. And he understood power more than politics. It is not, therefore, surprising that in politics he was always beaten by the politician Jinnah. The country people saw in lovable Fazlul Huq a robust and a vibrant personality trampling his way across the hazards of his life, seizing its prizes as they fell and exulting in its power if he could do something for the masses.

Fazlul Huq was the only son of his father, Mohammad Wazed Ali, a reputed lawyer of Barisal. His grandfather Kazi Akram Ali

was a practicing *mukta:* (lawyer in small criminal courts only) in Barisal when Persian was the court's language.

Raisi Begum, the second daughter of Fazlul Huq tells an interesting anecdote. When Fazlul Huq was only six months old something bizarre happened. Chakhar, their village was lashed by cyclone and storm which left behind a trail of devastation. His mother thought, that was the end of Barisal. In order to keep Fazlul Huq and his sister alive, his mother fed little Fazlul Huq, a six months old baby and his sister, put them in a large copper bowl and set it adrift into the water with the address put in a Tabiz tucked around the arm. Within an hour however the bowl was recovered by the villagers and put back to mother.

When he was a school boy, he was more fond of sports than books. When his mother was worried Fazlul Huq said confidently, "Don't worry, let the examination come. I shall pass easily". Indeed he did with brilliant result. His power of absorption of facts marvelled many.

Fazlul Huq grew up in Quran reading atmosphere, where it was thought knowledge of Urdu and Persian was a sign of culture and good breed. Fazlul Huq was a first class B.Sc. of triple honours-Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry and then first class M.A. in Mathematics. He was a favourite Student of Dr. P.C. Roy, the renowned scientist of undivided Bengal who complained to Fazlul Huq's father, "Your son did not read at all but ran after sports and football tournaments." In fact Fazlul Huq often said he was no 'bookworm'. But he was a prodigious child of nature.

Fazlul Huq was eloquent both in English, Bengali and Urdu. Remember that he moved the Lahore Resolution in Urdu. He could also speak Persian and Arabic. When Iranian Shahanshah and Faisal of Arabia came to Pakistan, Fazlul Huq did not require any interpreter to speak to them. He could freely recite the poetry of Milton, Shelly, Byron, Roomi and Hafiz.

Fazlul Huq married Khurshid Talat Begum, the daughter of Nawab Syed Mohammad Khan Bahadur, a grand daughter of Nawab Abdul Latif, C. I. E. It is incredible to think that Fazlul Huq, a popular

leader of Bengali peasants married a lady who could not speak Bengali. The marriage with the Nawab family brought Fazlul Huq a product of wealthy middle class within the circle of the Muslim aristocracy of Bengal.

The marriage according to Raisi Begum, has an interesting anecdote. Syed Ali Ashraf and Syed Ali Mehedi, The elder brothers of Khurshid Talat begum were the students of Presidency College, Calcutta, where Fazlul Huq too studied. Khurshid Begum would often write letters to her brothers. Fazlul Huq had a chance of seeing some of those letters. He was fascinated by the facile and enlightened pen of Khurshid Talat Begum.

When he passed his M.A., Fazlul Huq could not forget this lady. He told his father about his choice. His father brushed aside saying, "They are too rich and aristocratic for us"But Fazlul Huq was too keen. He gave an ultimatum to his father that unless the marriage was arranged he would walk out of the house for good. Fazlul Huq's grand mother was too distressed and could not afford to lose the only grand-son. She said to Fazlul Huq's Father, "Why should you not send the proposal? We are not too poor and we have education too. We are not inferior to them."

At last the marriage took place with all pomp and pageantry. The conjugal life however broke down after few years on the incompatibility of temperament. Khurshid begum was a tough lady of impeccable virtue. She did not approve of his resigning from the government service and entering politics. She thought politics was nonsense. She did not like the undisciplined and expansive life of Fazlul Huq. She did not understand Fazlul Huq nor did he understand her.

One day two men had come to stay in Fazlul Huq's house. It was a wintry night. In the drawing room Fazlul Huq shared his quilt with two men. In the morning Mrs. Huq found Fazlul Huq lying on the floor and these two men comfortably snoring on the bed under the quilt. It was too much for Mrs. Talat Begum, a lady of no nonsense personality. She wanted an orderly and settled life. Fazlul Huq was too great a man to settle down in a conventional family life. His world was wider and thoughts on the people and the country

dominated his being. He gave himself up totally to the country and the people.

The kabinnama when unrolled spread into a paper of about ten feet in length and contained the mohar money of Rs. 25,000/=. Talat Begum filed a suit against Fazlul Huq more for harrasing him than realising money from him. She said, "What does he think of himself? He thinks none can fight with him". In fact she filed a suit for mohar money as well as maintenance allowance of Rs. 500/= Per month. She won the case. After paying two instalments of maintenance, Fazlul Huq could not continue paying her. During this period he was hovering almost on insolvency.

Talat Begum was an enlightened lady though she did not have formal education. She was of choleric temperament and quite effusive when she started talking. Her brother's son Iqbal Ahmed told, "Once she started talking to me and continued for long. When I started moving away she also followed me unconsciously and went on talking".

She had her own ideas about cleanliness. She made a fetish of it. She did not allow any body to enter her room. If when she bought any chicken egg, she would wash it few times with ashes and store it. She would not catch hold of any coin by her bare hand but use in variably a piece of paper. She did not allow her servantg to make her bed or food. She lived an austere and simple life in the house of her second daughter Raisi Begum. She was too proud to receive any help from Fazlul Huq but lived on help from her daughter who in turn took moey occasionally from Fazlul Huq.

Some time in 1953, this lady got exhausted in shouting at her maid servant Jamila and suddenly died of a stroke in the kitchen with a piece of bread in her han.

Fazlul Huq had an abiding interesting Muslum culture. When one of his nephews after passing his matriculation was seeking admission in St. Xavier's College, Calcutta he reprimanded him and said, "Everyone in our family studies in a college with Islamic culture and Ideology." He advised him to go to the Islamia College.

He was a good Muslim and something more. He was a humanist. He decided early to carry the load of Bengalee peasants' sorrow on his lone shoulder and would fight till something was done for them. But his interest was not always confined to Bengal. It

traveled far beyond its border. Exasperated by the conduct of some Hindus at Chandur Biswa in Central Province who conspired to send six innocent Muslims to the gallows by perjured witnesses, he wrote a sharp letter to Gandhi, which said, "Not a word has dropped from your lips and not a word has flowed from your pen to indicate that you condemn the conduct of the Hindus who vied with one another in a gruesome of lies with the sole aim of swearing away Muslim lives. How are we to interpret your silence?"

The students were dear to his heart. Here is an anecdote which gives a glimpse of his mind. After finishing his prepared address at the convocation of the Dhaka University in 1957, he turned to his companion with tears welling in his eyes, and said in an emotion choked voice, "Shahjahan, look, so many Muslim boys are taking their degrees. They are all my sons. When they grow up they will be great and they will bring honour to Bengal-nay to the whole of Pakistan."

He once called Hindu Press as 'reptile press' and some other time said, "I have got an iron rod for them". On another occasion he said, "If Hindu press praise me then be sure I am doing harm to the Muslims. If they rebuke me then take it that I am doing good to the Muslims," Yet the powerful Hindu leaders like Ashutosh Mukherjee, C. R. Das, Sarat Bose and Dr. P. C. Roy liked Fazlul Huq. They knew that there was an element of humanity in Fazlul Huq. Whatever he might do to the Hindus, they knew hatred never corroded his breast.

Once I asked an associate of Fazlul Huq. "What is the single most valuable character in Fazlul Huq?" He said unhesitatingly, "Big heart". This is indeed very true. He was a prince among men. He was a paragon of large heartedness. Ordinary mortal cannot comprehend the range and quality of his heart. Here is a story told by Solaiman, a former M. N. A. That was in 1954. He was detained in his house after the dismissal of the United front Government.

"One morning he was reading a letter with tears in his eyes. He gave me the letter to read, it was from a woman from Kushtia whose husband had been an ex-worker of Bata Shoe Factory in Calcutta and had lost his job after the establishment of Pakistan and he was suffering from **T.B.** for a long time. The lady wrote she had no money for arranging treatment for her husband and they were almost starving. The letter from the lady moved the great leader so

much that for some time he could not talk. Sher-e-Bangla himself was in financial difficulties during those days. He Immediately telephoned Syed Azizul Huq for some money and as soon as the same reached him he sent the amount to the telegraph office for sending the amount immediately to the lady. He was absolutely restless and telephoned the telegraph master a dozen times till he was told the telegraph money order had been sent."

Fazlul Huq died as a man with a mission unfinished. So ponderous were the problems of the mute millions, he felt towards the end of his life that his mission would not be successful. Distressed by the misery of the people he said, "During last fifty years I could do nothing for these people. Thousands are suffering throughout the country, possibly I shall have to leave keeping my mission in complete."

SOURCES OF HIS POWER AND LEGENDAR REPUTATION

What were the sourceds of his power and popularity to make his reputation legendary?

(1) Fazlul Haq brought a new style in the politics of Bengal of those days. Till then all the Muslim leaders were scions of feudal aristocracy nourished by the might and splendour of the British. They all traded in Islam and pleaded to the Imperial masters for better treatment of the Muslims. Fazlul Huq brushed against the British and never cared for the titles. He was a new comer in the politics of Bengal with the slogan of 'Dal Bhat' (lentil and rice) for the masses.

(2) He grew up with two consuming passions, one was the feeling for the masses-the downcast, miserable and crushed millions of Muslim Bengal. He completely merged himself into their lives. He emerged as a little man's big friend. He tried to siphon off economic power out of the *Zamindars* who lived in the cities in order to give relief to the peasants. He liberated them from economic slavery and despair. Muslim masses emasculated by tyranny and hostility of *Zamindars* and

money lenders were saved by series of acts- Bengal Tenancy Amendment act, Bengal non-Agricultural Tenants Act, Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act, The Money lenders Act, the Labour Welfare Act, Maternity Benefit Act etc.

(3) Another passion was his concern for the education of the people. To make up the leeway he wanted education to be some sort of mass industry. Most of the colleges and schools and hostels that are spread over undivided Bengal are directly or indirectly indebted to him. The list makes an impressive reading. Even the Dhaka University student are grateful to a hostel, where many students lived and got pecuniary help from him. Though he joined the Khilafat Movement himself, he did not like that it should interrupt the education of the Muslim students. During Non-co-operation Movment in 1920, in a meeting held at armenitola park in Dhaka, when C. R. Das called upon the students to boycott the British education, Fazlul Huq staking his prestige in the Congress in the same meeting rejected the idea and asked the Muslim "not to boycott the education, as they had done earlier and suffered."

(4) As a speaker both in parliament and on the platform, Fazlul Huq stood in the front rank of his time. Neither Shyama Prasad nor Kiran Shankar, the articulate Hindus were any match. There was a quality about his rhetoric which arrested attention. He loved the pageantry as well as the distinction of words, and many passages in his speeches swell in the memory of men of his time. He was good on a set occasion but even better in the unrehearsed moments of debate. Before he spoke he surveyed the crowd for the language he should choose. I saw him in 1939 at Barisal addressing a crowd. When he saw in them many common and unsophisticated people, he switched over to local Barisal dialect. The Dhaka crowd saw the vitality and sparkle of his oratory while welcoming the Turkish prime minister in 1956. When he was already on the verge of senility and his vitality had

flagged perceptively and his admirers were apprehensive about his capacity of making a good speech, he thrust aside the prepared speech and spoke extempore in his moving phrases that awed everybody. He was an old school orator-expansive, ringing and grand.

(5) His large heartedness and charity for the poor and the needy is legendary. His quick wit and sense of humour is remembered with pride. As a master of English prose he had few equals in the Indian subcontinent.

Here is a case of his unique sense of magnanimity. The office of the Bengal Muslim literary society was at Mirzapur Street in Calcutta. Due to arrears of rent, notice was served to put its property into auction. The secretary, Abul Mansur Ahmed and few others went to Fazlul Huq finding no other source of help. In those days Fazlul Huq was living in the first floor building at Swarnamoyee Road and was financially in straits.

Fazlul Huq said, "Today my fund is as empty as the stomach of a winter snake. Please come tomorrow at 5 P.M. I shall see whether I get something from the court."

Abul Mansur and others went to Fazlul Huq's house at 4 P. M. next day. To their dismay they found that two Kabuliwalas with big turban and stick were poised at the gate.

Soon after Fazlul Huq returned from the court, had a quick look at Abul Mansur and Kabuliwalas and went up. After a while he came down, put his hand in his pocket and gave to Abul Mansur whatever he had. To Kabuliwalas he said, "Today I could not give anything. Hope you don't mind." They retorted with an aggressive posture of their hands, "If you can't return the money. Are you not ashamed to take the loan?"

Raisi Begum says, 'Though my father might roar like a tiger, he was very soft and kind to the poor and the needy. To the children he was very tender."

Instances are not rare of the fact that many of his relations have taken advantage of his goodness and yet

they are left unsatisfied.

In his Jhautala house, he came across a man whom he did not know and enquired who he was. The stranger replied, "Do you not know me? I come from Barisal. I Am living in your house for the last two months as your guest."

FAZLUL HUQ-A FOUNDER OF PAKISTAN

Fazlul Huq can be cited as one of the founders of Pakistan along with Jinnah. To be more precise, he created the base for its creation and Quaid-e-Azam gave it a final shape. One may wonder, how?

In the original scheme of fully autonomous state for the Muslims dreamed by Philosopher Poet Iqbal in 1930 Bengal was left out. To Iqbal Bengal possibly was too far away and detached, where the Muslims did not travel with the mainstream of Muslim Indian thoughts and moods.

But when Fazlul Huq formed the ministry in Bengal in 1937 and his leadership brought into focus the ability and vitality of Muslim Bengal, it dawned upon Iqbal that the separate nationhood might as well embrace Muslim Bengal. In his letter to Jinnah on 21.6.37 he wrote, "Why should not the Muslims of North West India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self government just as other nations?"

By extending the measures for education and reservation of 50% seats in the services, Fazlul Huq created a new generation of middle class people, a generation who by 1940 to 1946, Jinnah needed only a couple of visits to Bengal and by that time the entire Bengal was saturated with the ideology of Pakistan through this middle class. The Muslim League became so powerful and all devouring that Hindus and British retreated before it.

Fazlul Huq had thwarted another sinister design of Hindus in Bengal. Muslim Majority was slim and marginal. Any twist of partiality during the census would have upset the balance and the Muslim majority would have turned into minority. The Hindus were exactly doing this in the census operation of 1941. Fazlul Huq fell the lot of wording and moving the Lahore resolution.

In 1939 a Muslim League session was held at Meerut. There it

was decided to form a subcommittee with Jinnah as President and Liaquat Ali Khan as secretary to frame a constitution for the proposed homeland for the Indian Muslims. The subcommittee could not produce any agreed constitution for the new state. One of the members of the subcommittee Sekander Hyat Khan insisted on the acceptance of the plan of several Hindu-Muslims states. But it was rejected by Jinnah. Then the subcommittee approached Fazlul Huq. He drafted the Lahore resolution and placed before the Muslim League Working Committee. It was accepted by them without any amendment. The resolution was moved in historic Lahore session of Muslim league on 23rd march, 1940 by Fazlul Huq himself.

He wrote in October, 1945 to one Shahjahan, a student of Aligarh University: "As regards Pakistan, I stand by the resolution whose wording I drafted and which I moved in the Lahore session of the Muslim League and which is now the basis of the Pakistan demand. It is a pity that Muslim Leaders do not understand what Pakistan means and shout a slogan merely to catch the fancy of Mussalmans of India in moving that Resolution."

FAZLUL HUQ AND JINNAH- A COMPARATIVE GLIMPSE

Once I had an opportunity of accompanying Fazlul Huq and S. M. Taifoor to the house of Hasan Ali of Mymensingh. In the drawing room hang a picture of Jinnah. When I said, " This picture of Jinnah:. This picture of Quaid-e-Azam is very good." Immediately Fazlul Huq retorted, "He is not a Quaid-e-Azam. To the Muslims, only Quaid-e-Azam is the prophet himself." I was left to wonder. Fazlul Huq's irreverence for Jinnah is of course understandable. Fazlul Huq was already a leader of Bengal when Jinnah was groping for his political identity and leadership. Often in political arena they clashed discordantly. Both were great but they were made of different stuff altogether.

Jinnah was cold, correct and at times too correct and never shrank from principle. Fazlul Huq was just the antithesis. His warmth; flamboyant personality was a sharp contrast to Jinnah's coldness. Volatile and mercurial, he was carried by impulse and in fact he said so, Jinnah was cast in a classic mould and was brilliant, determined and patient and was led by cold logic. Jinnah's face was

more private than Fazlul Huq's. At times Fazlul Huq said something on temporary urge and impulse. Then he regretted. But Jinnah was cool and calculating, thought twice before he moved. Once he decided anything he stuck and stuck to it till he was through with it. Fazlul Huq's likes and dislikes were fast, immediate and ephemeral. Jinnah's likes and prejudices were slow, steady and sure. Jinnah's oratory was keen, pointed and sharp like the edge of a knife. Fazlul Huq's oratory was often a literary masterpiece delivered with a flourish.

In political craft, in moves and manoeuvres and in strength of personality, Jinnah always beat Fazlul Huq. In his own arena, Jinnah humbled and crushed Fazlul Huq. When Jinnah was out of humour he cast a chill over all and did not hesitate to freeze snub. But few have seen Fazlul Huq in anger or indignation.

Fazlul Huq's life was set in an atmosphere of tradition but Jinnah had a break with tradition from early life and had preferred to wear immaculate western dress and had even married a Parsi lady. Jinnah's private life suffered due to keen sense of duty to the nation and Fazlul huq's life of domesticity suffered due to much warmth and fraternity with the fellowmen and their interference. Jinnah frustrated with the bleak future of Indian politics decided once to settle in England permanently but to Fazlul Huq such a decision was unthinkable.

Fazlul Huq was a man of the masses and his urge and impulse was identified with the masses and their intentions. Mia Iftekharuddin rightly said, "Mr. A.K. Fazlul Huq is not a calculating politician or statesman. He is a great Bengalee with Bengalee mother's heart." But Jinnah was intense and detached and worded for their well being from afar. Once M.A.H. Ispahani asked Jinnah whether he would like to visit Khawaja Naazimuddin lying ill at a hospital in New Delhi sometime in 1946. Jinnah declined saying, "If I take to visiting the sick and ailing, I would have to devote most of my time to this duty and would not have enough hours in which to do my important word...." This was impossible for Azlul Huq.

Fazlul Huq was basically a people's leader, at times a demagogue, and his reasoning and wits have been sharpened by

experience but Jinnah was a political technocrat organizer and a ruthless party fixer but Fazlul Huq thrived on his own colourful personality and oratorical brilliance and to him organization was only secondary.

With ail the sympathy and sacrifice, Fazlul Huq's contribution though pervasive had been disjointed and at times without any direction and purpose. But Jinnah stuck to the theme of Pakistan and would go down in the history as the father of the nation. Jinnah's political career had been a rising crescendo of success but Fazlul Huq's life had often been pockmarked with failure and frustration. Rightly however Jinnah remains the Quaid-e-Azam, a great leader of the Muslims and Fazlul Huq takes his place in history as the tiger of Bengal. If Jinnah was the brain and activist behind the liberation of a big chunk of Indian Muslims from Hindu and British exploitation, Fazlul Huq was the heart that beat fast and at times slow for the Muslim league. To Jinnah Muslim and the Muslim league are inseparable and are the two sides of the same picture. To Fazlul Huq the life of the Muslim community is larger than vested interests and Zamindars.

No two persons could be so diverse and conflicting to each other as Jinnah and Fazlul Huq, Yet their common frustration and grievance against the Hindus bridged their variegation. They are however the same in their ambition, and legal acumen, thrust for Muslim power and tireless zeal and dedication for the will being of the masses. It is interesting to note that in times of irritation, Jinnah called Fazlul Huq "Impossible man" and Fazlul Huq never called him Quaid-e-Azam even during the lucid interval of their friendship.

EARLY CAREER

Few remember that when Jinnah as walking up and down the streets of Bombay as an young, struggling Barrister and Liaquat Ali Khan was just a ten year old boy, Fazlul huq was organizing the birth of Muslim League in Dhaka along with Salimullah and Viqarul Mulk in 1906. The

constitution drafted by Fazlul huq was the constitution of all India Muslim League.

Soon however he was enticed by the government service and entered as Deputy Magistrate. Remember Nawab Salimullah and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan also started their early career as Deputy Magistrate. Fazlul Huq was posted to Jamalpur as SDO (Sub-Divisional Officer) and here he met Tony Mirza, a Deputy Superintendent of Police and father of former President Iskander Mirza of Pakistan

When Tony Mirza did not have accommodation, Fazlul Huq vacated part of his house for Mirza. Never could he realise that the son of this Tony Mirza would evict him from power later in life and rule east Bengal in high handed authority.

As a S.D.O. he toured in the interior and peered into the miserable plight of the peasants, the underclass of the countryside. In 1911 ambitious and capable Fazlul Huq, an Assistant Registrar of Co-operatives hoped for a promotion to the post of Registrar. The annulment of partition in 1905 upset his hope. To the dismay of Fazlul Huq, it was given to one Jamini Mitra, a senior Hindu. Fazlul Huq resigned in frustration in 1912. Within a period of five years he however earned the limlight as a leading lawyer of Calcutta High Court.

Fazlul Huq was in the forefront of the movement for the partition of Bengal in 1905 to carve out a province from the backward Muslim hinterland of Bengal and Assam. The British had declared the partition a settled fact on 19tgh july, 1905 but the fury and tumult by the selfish Hindus forced the British to revoke the partition in 1911. The British was bullied ito surrender, emerged as an awkward and fumbling ruler who was not so mighty after all. The story has it that while shock of annulment of partition hastened the death of Salimullah in 1914 at the age of 45, Fazlul Huq roared like a tiger across the length and breadth of the country rousing the sentiments of the muslims against the timidity and faltering of the British. The upshot was that the offer of Dhaka University by the British came as a gift and a solace to the aggrieved Muslims after the

annulment of partition.

In 1913 he defeated a Hindu Zaminder with the vote of Hindus and was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council. Here in his maiden speech, his oratorical brilliance captivated the Governor so much that he sprang from his seat to congratulate Fazlul Huq though the theme was not palatable to him. It was about the incalculable harm that was done to the Muslims by the annulment of the partition and the call for the University at Dhaka.

With the death of Salimullah, Muslim Leagne which was confined to the upper crust of the muslum Society also lay dying. Fazlul Huq a man of restless vitality thought less of the Muslum League for the time being and turned to the peasant movement under the forum of Krishak Proja Samity (Peasants and Downtrodden Committee). His unbounded energy and fiery speeches began to draw larger and larger crowd everyday around him. Many political leaders and social workers came into its fold. Though a leader of the Krishak Proja Movement he was called upon to preside over the annual session of Bengal presidency Muslim League at Dhaka in 1914. It was a strange anamoly. But those days were different.

The Lucknow pact of 1916 was a product of Congress and league en tente brought about by the common grievance of Hindus and Muslims against the British. The pact gave weightage to the Muslim minority provinces. In those days no movement of political importance escaped his attention. He took a leading part in the deliberations and was a signatory to the pact. This is how he spoke as a Muslim Leaguer, "I believe all thinking men are thoroughly convinced that the key note of our real progress lies in the goodwill, concord, harmony and co-operation between the two great sister communities. The true focus of progress is a matter which is entirely in our own hands".

Look at the vitality and paradox of this man. He was a Muslim Leaguer to safeguard the interests of the Muslim middle class, Krishak Proja man to free the peasants from the oppression of the *Zamindars* and a Congress man to hasten the Independence of India. As the Muslim League in those days had no direction and sense of purpose except the role to assert their loyalty to the British and secure the interest of Muslims in the Administrative hierarchy, it

was not surprising that the same man found no contradiction to preside over the Midnapur Session of Provincial Congress in 1918. In that year he emerged as the General Secretary of the Indian national Congress, later as the Chairman of the reception committee and a member of the all India Congress Working Committee. He got Motilal Nehru, Father of Jawaharlal Nehru to work as his Joint Secretary,

His political affiliation traveled widely and effectively in the political arena of his time. No Indian had so much variegated interests as him. In 1918 he was a leader of Proja Movement, President of Muslim League and General Secretary of Indian National Congress-all rolled into one.

Jullianwalabagh massacre by the British had deeply distressed him. Fazlul Huq was one of the members of the Enquiry Committee along with Gandhi, C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru. He rushed to the place of occurrence at Jullianwalabagh to have afirst hand information of the massacre.

His romance with the Congress ended by 1921. In a letter to letter to Sarat Bose he wrote, "Your ideals and mine are different. You have adopted an ideal in the Congress to which I cannot subscribe..... Briefly stated the Congress is now mostly composed of irresponsible vagabonds who are unscrupulous and full of conceit and supercilious arrogance which is most reprehensible. I am sure your conference will be a miniature of the bigger picture after all."

Krishak Proja Movement was transformed into a political party in 1929. Sir Abdur Rahim was made the President, Akram Khan the General Secretary and Fazlul Huq was Elected as the President of the Krishak Proja Party as Abdul Momen and Akram Khan did not contest.

In The Round Table Conference of 1930 and 1931 in London, he was a staunch Muslim Leaguer and while speaking for separate electorate he asserted, "I wonder if Sir Austin Chamberlin has come across two such incongruous specimen of humanity as Dr. Moonjee and myself serving different religions worshipping different Gods. Differing in manners, in customs, perhaps in food, what is more, we have been placed by our religions into such watertight compartments that Dr. Moonjee's and my children will never intermarry with one another." This was the theme which Jinnah

elaborately and graphically advanced in later years as justification for the creation of Pakistan.

FAZLUL HUQ CONTESTS NAZIMUDDIN AT PATUAKHALI

By 1934 we get a glimpse of his mind towards Ahsan Manzil. Fazlul Huq had a natural antipathy against this Dhaka Nawab family. He thought they were the self- styled leaders of Bengal imposed by the patronage of the British. In the same year Fazlul Huq stood from the Barisal-Faridpur constituency for election to the Central Legislative Assembly. Fazlul Huq seemed to realise the baneful influence of Ahsan Manzil in Bengal politics and when Gaznavi stood in the election from Dhaka and Mymensingh constituency, Fazlul Huq wrote to his workers at Mymensingh, "Under no circumstances Gaznavi should be allowed to stand in the election. In fact he is only a puppet of Ahsan Manzil. Please do not think I have any personal grudge against Ahsan Manzil and Muslim Bengal. We cannot save Muslim Bengal unless we can rescue it from their clutches." The election of 1937 after the 1935 constitution pitted Fazlul Hup against Nazimuddin. Jinnah had appeared as the effective leader of all India Muslim League by this time. Jinnah came to Calcatta and stopped in the house of M. A. Ispahani at 5, Camack Street and the meeting with the Muslim Leaders took place there. At the biding of Jinnah, the United Muslim Party of Nazimuddin and Suhrawardy merged with the all India Muslim League. On The question of abolition of *Zamindari* without compensation, Krishak Proja Party could not however merge with the Muslim League.

The contest of Fazlul Huq against the Muslim Leaguer, Nazimuddin in his own den, their *Zamindari* in Patuakhali is memorable. The whole array of the Muslim League leaders and students was set against Fazlul Huq of Krishak Proja (Peasants and Tenants) Party. Fazlul Huq declared, "I am going to contest not with Nazimuddin but in fact with the governor Sir John Anderson. An all out fight ensues from today between the *Zamindars* and the peasants. By the grace of God, I shall abolish *Zamindari* within shortest possible time." He projected this contest as a fight between *Zamindars* and peasants. Fazlul Huq was seen going round his constituency on an open and ramshackle 'dingi' boat in his shabby

'kurta' and 'pyjama' just to cover his body. Against this background of squalor and poverty there was might and splendour of feudal aristocracy. Quite a number of high police officials and numerous policemen were hurled at the small town of Patuakhali. Additionally an 'Armada' of steam-launches, speed boats, motor boats, green boats and smaller country crafts had literally painted the Patuakhali River in various colors.

In the election campaign launched by him, Fazlul Huq proved himself to be a master tactician and an unbeatable demagogue. The story has it that he went to a place for election meeting but he was not allowed to land from his launch since there a huge crowd already gathered to receive Nazimuddin. So Fazlul Huq, a quick witted man, devised a plan. He pretended that he would go to the graveyard of his friend nearby to offer his prayer. At last the supporters of Nazimuddin allowed him to disembark at a place a little far away. He went to a grave and started praying. In course of his prayer he began to recite about the deteriorated condition of the country and said how his friend's sons and daughters are hindering his duty to serve the country, His pretension paid off. Soon the people gathered around him and began to shout, "Fazlul Huq Zindabad (Long Live)".

Khalida Edib Hanum, a journalist and a colleague of Kamal Ataturk in her book, "Inside India", gave a vivid description of the election. The 'Advance' an English paper of Subhash Chandra Bose wrote in a banner headline, "The Darling of Governor Anderson lies prostrate in Patuakhali." After his victory by a margin of thirteen thousand votes Fazlul Huq proceeded to Calcutta and thundered, "In the event of the failure of the Government to accept the demands of the peasants, I would throw the writers' Building into Laldighi."

Jinnah and other Muslim Leaguer now persuaded him to join the Muslim League and a league coalition govt. was formed under his leadership as Prime Minister of undivided Bengal. As Fazlul Huq was out of sympathy with the Governor Anderson, he had doubt whether he would be at all called to from the coalition ministry. Fazlul Huq leaving his admirers, friends and workers in his house at Jhautala Road went to the Government house to know the mind of the Governor. After an hour, he returned and did not tell anything to

the people at his house. He kept them in suspense. Then Abdul Hamid Chowdhury of Mymensingh ventured to ask him crisply, "Commissioned?" Fazlul Huq quietly said, "Done".

In 1938, after he accepted the Presidentship of Muslim League he was asked to resign from the Presidentship of Krishak Proja Party. But Fazlul Huq declined. He said, " I want the unity of the Muslims as well as the unity of peasants. I can remain President of both the organizations". He further added, "If you want to save Bengal, you must save Bengalee Muslims first. If that is the aim, then we must remain in both the organizations." Once when he was pointed out the contradiction he said in a public meeting, "Do not confuse principle with the means. To save yourself from sun and rain is your principle. To put the umbrella at different angles according to the needs is only the means".

FAZLUL HUQ BECOMES CHIEF MINISTER

The Government of Fazlul Huq was a unique milestone in the history of Bengal. After four centuries of frustration and despair, at last a Government was formed in which the Bengalee Muslims held their sway. It was decided to take eleven ministers out of which Muslims would be six and Hindus Five. Out of six Muslims half will be from Krishak Proja and another half from Muslim League. Of the five Hindus three would be from caste Hindus and two from Scheduled Caste. Fazlul Huq, Nowsher Ali, Shamsuddin were supposed to be from Krishak Proja and Nawab Habibulla, Nazimuddin, Shaheed Suhrawardy would represent the Muslim League.

On second thought Shamsuddin was dropped. Abul Mansur Ahmed tells an interesting story about the development, "Shamsuddin Saheb was naturally upsei. We are no less upset. Some friends of ours and I went to meet A.K. Fazlul Huq sacrificing our evening cinema programme. Fazlul Huq denied the truth of any such rumour. When we were returning Fazlul Huq asked me to wait. I waited. At about nine o' clook he took me out in his car. The car was moving so slowly that even the horse carts of rickshaws were not by passed. The speed of our car should not be more than five to seven miles. During our journey Fazlul Huq was emotionally

ventilating his feelings. Fazlul Huq said, 'God has given me the responsibility of providing 'Dal Bhat' (lentil and rice) to seven crores (70 million) of peasants in Bengal I am wondering how to carry out the responsibility. Some time my heart trembles due to anxiety.'

He did not say this only verbally. Fazlul Huq pulled my hands towards his chest to feel his heart beat. After wondering along the street for a couple of hours we reached the house of Nalini Ranjan Sarkar. We were taken to his first floor drawing room. There we sat together discussing why Shamsuddin was not to be taken as a minister. Both Fazlul Huq and Nalini Ranjan Sarkar said to me, "The Governor, Anderson does not approve of Shamsuddin. If we do not exclude Shamsuddin then our swearing in ceremony cannot be held tomorrow. And ultimately our ministry may not be formed. Besides, the European party is still hoping to make Nazimuddin Chief Minister".

Next day the swearing-in ceremony of Fazlul Huq's cabinet took place. In place of Shamsuddin Nawab Musharraf Hussain was inducted as a minister. Fazlul Huq justified the inclusion of Musharraf Hussain saying that his "Kaashak Proja Party in the cabinet will be reduced to minority if Shamsuddin's place is left vacant."

Usually the Prime Minister held the portfolio of Home Department but Fazlul Huq dedicated to the cause of education preferred to take the education portfolio. This was the peak period for the career of Fazlul Huq. So it was also the brighter period of Muslims of Bengal. It was during this period he fixed fifty percent reservation of seats for the Muslims in public services. He also passed a law that seventy five percent of all future appointment would go to Muslims until the required percentage of fifty was reached. He did not remain comforted by making this arrangement, but appointed a high ranking Muslim I.C.S officer to see that this was implemented.

In 1938 Bengal Debtors Act was passed; and in 1939 and 1940 Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act and Money Lenders Act were passed respectively lifting the burden of debt from the back of the peasantry in Bengal. The Krishak Proja Party, quite a radical party,

however, complained that during the first year the new regime appeared to be purposeless, vaccilating and slothful. When the K.P. party brought a non-confidence motion, only then Fazlul Huq's cabinet got a jolt and hurriedly began to pass the series of acts. But the plan of abolition of Zamindary was not carried out. Instead, the Flowd Commission was set up casting to the winds the earlier pledge of outright abolition of Zamindari.

FAZLUL HUQ MOVES LAHORE RESOLUTION

Meanwhile the Muslim League under the leadership of Jinnah became the vehicle of hopes and aspirations of the the Indian Muslims. It was to guide the Muslims to a new destiny. The Muslims, so long groping without any sense of direction and purpose, began to settle finally down to the partition of India.

To Fazlul Huq fell the lot of drafting and moving the Lahore Resolution. It is said that when Jinnah asked him whether he could move the Lahore Resolution, Fazlul Huq, self confident and volatile as he was, said with his characteristic flourish, "I could do it better than anybody else present including Mr. Jinnah himself." Then come the historic hour when the resolution was to be moved at the open session in the huge pandal in Minto park facing the the Lahore Fort and the Badshahi Mosque.

On 23rd March, 1940, Fazlul Huq fell slightly indisposed in his hotel room after his midday meal and was late in attending the session. The proceedings had commenced. Suddenly there was a stir. Some persons were seen entering the pandal through the side gate. A man in front announced in a loud voice, "Wazir-e-Azam, Bengal, honourable Fazlul Huq. When he came near the gate of the pandal. There was vociferous applause "Fazlul Huq Zindabad." As the platform was away it took for him ten minutes to walk. The thunderous greetings went on unabated. When he took his seat, Jinnah told, "Order, order, the Tiger has been caged." Fazlul Huq spoke for two hours in Urdu. Even the fastidious Urdu knowing men of Lucknow appreciated his delivery in Urdu. Fazlul Huq moved the Lahore Resolution with al his zeal and flourish. He lashed the Hindus for their intolerance and incongruity. Then he declared,

"The Muslims of India would not consent to any scheme which was framed without their approval. To them only that constitution was forced on them they would make such a constitution absolutely unwordable." He hoped " those who had it in their power to shape the future constitution of India would take any step which might be regretted."

Moulana Reazuddin of Lahore spontaneously called him,
" Shere-e- Bangla (Tiger of Bengal)". And the title stuck to his name. . No other title was appropriate to the valiant Fazlul Huq.

Later he remarked, "Nobody can dare to finger on the resolution which I myself drafted". But the history tells otherwise. The Lahore Resolution of 1940 proposing two sovereign states moved by Fazlul Huq has been battered by later day events. The aggressiveness and fury of Hindus against the Muslims compelled Muslim League to abandon the conception of soverign states. The Muslim League realised that unless there was complete unity among them in the face of tumult and fury of Hindus, Muslims could not achieve anything. If anything was achieved it could not be sustained. Some among East Pakistani Muslims have not yet forgotten the Lahore resolution and still think nostalgically of sovereign states.

Fazlul Huq forms Second Ministry. His detractors say that the career of Fazlul Haq is chequerboard of alternate loyalty and disloyalty to the Muslim League. Fazlul Haq however complained that the Muslim League high command never allowed a bonafide Bengalee Muslim in the inner chamber of decision.
The upshot of wrangling between Jinnah and Fazlul Huq was that the League ministers of the Huq cabinet resigned enmasse at the instance of Jinnah. Thus the League Proja coalition Government formed in 1937 came to an unhappy end in 1941.
The bitterness with the Muslim League projpelled Fazlul Huq to forge a common front with Shyama Prosad Mukherjee as his Finance Minister.

To Fazlul huq Shyama Prosada was no stranger. Fazlul Huq when he was a young lawyer was an articled junior of Ashotosh Mukherjee, father of Shyama Prosad. Here Fazlul Huq did a tactical

mistake. Shyama Prosad was the symbol of Hindu bigotry and intolerance. The coalition with the Hindu leaders like Shyama Prosad seemed to shake his hold upon the confidence of the resurgent Muslim masses. Fazlul Huq however claimed that the justification for such coalition Government was to bring abort communal harmont between Hindus and Muslimm. In fact Fazlul huq visited Raipura, Narsingdi and Dhaka, the riot stricken areas with Shyama Prosad Mukherjee to preach the massage of peace and good will. The admirers of Fazlul Huq claimed that the Calcutta University opened its door for the employment of two hundred Muslims. It was further said that when Shyama Prosad was finance minister it was possible to take eighteen Muslims out of twenty one vacancies for commercial tax officer etc. With the Muslim League stalwarts like Nazimuddin, Suhrawardy arrayed in the opposition bench the coalition government of Fazlul Huq could not survive for a long. Thus started the decline and fall of Fazlul Huq in political firmament for more than a decade n Bengal.

Fazlul Huq had to resign under the pressure of Governor Sir John Herbert who evicted him from power under the pretext of forming an all party cabinet.

The letters that were exchanged between Governor and Fazlul Huq were manifestation of documents of his valiant and rebellious spirit. Fazlul Huq wrote,... "You must be in an ugly mood." He further added, "I write to say that I owe you no explanation whatever in respect of my conduct in failing to consult you before announcing what according to you is the decision of the Government; but I certainly owe you a duty to administer a mild warning that indecorous language such as has been used in your letter under reply should, in future, be avoided in any correspondence between the Governor and the Chief Minister."

Fazlul Huq was piqued by the following sentence in the letter of the Governor sent to him earlier,' If my information is correct, I shall expect an explanation from you at your interview to-morrow morning of your conduct in failing to consult me before announcing what purports to be the decision of the Government."

FAZLUL HUQ LEAVES MUSLIM LEAGUE

All seemed to go on well with the Muslim league and Fazlul Huq. But soon Fazlul Huq found himself out of sympathy with Jinnah and the Muslim League. This time the National defence Council, a council started by the British to strengthen war effort, stood between Jinnah and Fazlul Huq. When viceroy failed to bring the Muslim League in the council, he brought important Muslims within its fold over the head of Muslim league. Sikandar Hyat Khan, Sadullah and Fazlul Huq-the three chief ministers of the three Muslim Province joined in. Jinnah asked them to resign. The first two did but Fazlul Huq temporized. He was given time to reconsider his decision and to resign from the council. But Fazlul Huq wrote impudently and called Jinnah a failure "to discharge the heavy responsibility of his office in a constitutional and reasonable manner." He further added that "principles of democracy and autonomy were being subordinated to the arbitrary wishes of a single individual who sought to rule as an omnipotent authority over the destiny of thirty five million Muslims in the province of Bengal, who occupied an important position in the politics of sub continent." In fact, the secretary, Liaquat Ali Khan issued a show cause notice to him to explain within ten days why he should not be expelled from the party for his violation of party discipline. Fazlul Huq ignored. Fazlul Huq was feeling crushed to find himself treated by Jinnah as an ordinary member of the Muslim League. The expulsion of Fazlul Huq from the Muslim League had taken place by the courage of his own futile conviction.

Fazlul huq was volatile and impulsive. He lacked sense of history. He misread the future and destiny of Pakistan Muslim League. Owing to his refusal out of pride to submit to the party discipline he found himself expelled and left behind on the side lines of history. When one Shahjahan, an Aligarh student, asked Fazlul Huq to rejoin the Muslim League. He ruefully wrote back to him, "You say that the doors of the Muslim League are not barred against me. It shows how ignorant you are of facts. I will tell you the story briefly. After having won the 1936 election on the Krishak-Proja ticket I proceeded to form a coalition cabinetr in which I took a larger number of Muslim Leaguers than Krishak-Proja's. I Then left the Krishak Proja Party, joined the Muslim League and for five years I carried on propaganda in favour of the Muslim League and gave it

the strength which it now possesses. Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy, Sir Nazimuddin and others entered into a conspiracy to throw me out in order to form a cabinet without me. They tendered mass resignations of their offeces as ministers and broke my Muslim League Cabinet. They then sent an exparte report to Mr. Jinnah who made no enquiries into my case but expelled me from the League and put a ban on my re-entry into the League to operate for all time."

"At the present moment the ban is still operative on me and I cannot join the Muslim League even if I wanted to. You find, therefore, how incorrect is your remark that the doors of the Muslim League are not barred against me. As a matter of fact the doors of the Muslim League are not only barred but bolted so that I may not enter into the Muslim League. You then quote Mr. Jinnah's appeal to the Muslims to join the Muslim league. This appeal cannot apply to me because I am under a ban. I cannot join the Muslim League even if I wanted to join. Mr. Jinnah says that the Muslim League cannot be revengeful or vindictive. In my case it has been both revengeful and vindictive." For a while he was in the opposition sniping at the Muslim League and Jinnah. But it led him nowhere. when he found himself as an opposition leader his spirit was in full play and he used his oratorical gift to claw down the Muslim League and Jinnah. Here is his speech in Bengal Legislative Assembly on February 27, 1944, "Here the Ministers are not responsible to the legislature at all but are responsible to Mr. Jinnah as the head of the Muslim League."

His personal wrath against Jinnah seemed to blur his vision and perspective of history. He continued, "....Muslims outside the Muslim League belong to two classes, firstly those who accept the ideology of the League, but who cannot join the League on account of the autocracy of Mr. Jinnah. Secondly, those who are opposed to the very ideology of the League and cannot therefore conscientiously become members of the League and accept the leadership of Mr. Jinnah. It so happens, however, that although the Muslims outside the League are numerically superior to those in the League, they are utterty disorganized and are not match for the political and diplomatic manoeuvres of Mr. Jinnah."

He further said,...."Unforeseen circumstances have also helped the Muslim League. During the Congress regime of Provincial Autonomy in seven Provinces, the Congress volunteers and officials

were in many cases guilty of indiscreet excesses which were strongly resented by Muslims as encroachments on their legitimate rights, and which created a strong anti-Hindu feeling in the minds of the Muslims throughout India. The Muslim League was quick to seize its opportunity." "By unceasing propaganda and clever distortion of facts, they managed to rouse the passions of the Muslim multitude against the Congress and as a nest step, against the Hindu community. Muslims were thus naturally drawn towards the Muslim League as the only organized political body among the Muslims and their only haven of refuge against Hindu oppression. British Imperialistic policy also favored the growing political strength of the Muslim League as the British Government expected to be able to set off the Muslim League against the political ascendancy of the Congress. The result is that the Muslim League has not got foothold in the land which is not justified by the extent to which it can freely claim to be representative of Muslim interests."

This speech was the tirade of a frustrated man.He did not stop at that. He started a daily paper NABAJUG with the highly respected poet Nazrul Islam as the editor to berate the Muslim League and all that it stood for. Thus lonely, mournful, abandoned, he receded to into political eclipse for years.

Thus the greatest son of Bengal, a founder of Muslim League, a mover of Lahore resolution sat back at home in Calcutta brooding in frustration. Bengal loved this great son of Bengal but was too electrified by the prospect of a new state of Pakistan to follow him any more. They followed Jinnah with steadfast loyalty. They thought less of Bengal now and projected themselves as part of all India Muslim League struggling for Pakistan.

For as while Fazlul Huq decided to stay back in Calcutta; along with him a number of his nephews too decided to live in Calcutta. One of them Wazir Ali, an irreverent on, resented for advising him to live in India and said, "Mamujan (uncle) actually asked us to stay in West Bengal but he goes back to East Pakistan. We are trapped in India. We have to draw pension from here."

During this period when Fazlul Huq was in Calcutta he visited the

'Ittehad' paper Office occasionally. The editor of the newspaper Abul Mansur Ahmed once told him, "There was no popular leader in Bengal like you. On your death a lac of people would pay homage to you. Now God forbid if you happen to die there will not be more than five hundred people to attend your 'Janaza'. Fro ycur own fault you have lost your popularity."

Fazlul Huq laughed and said, "Be sure, to keep you happy I am not dying now. You are talking about my popularity; You will realize it the day I die." Fazlul Huq further added, "My enemies are misleading the people." Abul Mansur protested, "Nobody blames anybody unless he does wrong. You see nobody blames me,"

Fazlul Huq gave a hearty laugh and, "Who will speak ill of you? Have you done any good to anybody? Do some good work, then see how the people talk about you. Remember, The Fazli mango tree gets stoned but nobody bothers for Sheora tree. Nobody hits a useless tree." Abul Mansur says, "Fazlul Huq was right though at that time I felt hurt for comparing me with a Sheora Tree." As late as 1947, June, he was organizing to start a Muslim University of Aligarh style in Calcutta. He really did not believe that Pakistan would so soon materialize. He wrote to one Mr. M. K. Rahman, "further to our discussion of the scheme of establishing a Muslim University in Bengal. I write to inform you that idea may be abandoned now in view of the announcement of his Majesty's Government on 3rd instant. The decision to effect transference of power earlier than June, 1948 has bewildered us."

ELECTION OF 1954 IN EAST PAKISTAN

When Pakistan was created and Nazimuddin took over as Chief Minister of the new province of East Bengal Fazlul Haq lived in rejection at his Calcutta residence. From 1943 to 1947 he remained a passive spectator of formidable events engulfing the subcontinent. It was a torment for him to think that though he was once the undisputed leader of Bengal and in fact the mover of Pakistan resolution of 1940, partition had taken place without him.

Then at last in 1949 he came down to Dhaka. Here he was at a loss

about his accommodation. Quadir Sardar, an old admirer of Fazlul Haq gave him a flat at Aulad Hussain Road. Later however Fazlul Haq purchased a house at 27, K. M. Das Lane. Nazimuddin's malevolent Government put up a requisition notice but retreated later when Fazlul Huq threatened to sue the government in the Court of law.

Sometime in 1951 he joined the Government of East Bengal as Advocate General when Nurul Amin was the Chief Minister. He remained in anonymity for a couple of years. As an Advocate General he seemed to be a lost man. Yet as one foreign journalist noted, "When you talk politics with Fazlul Huq his eyes gleam with radiance like the eyes of an old horse." The heady climate of hope and enthusiasm that swept over the country began to fade away.

Struck by the slothfulness and incompetence of Nurul Amin's Government Fazlul Huq suddenly decided to quit his job and respond to the enticing call of the 1954 election. In March 1953, he wrote to the Prime Minister Nazimuddin not to delay the holding of election in East Bengal and urged him to fix a date. He threatened action in case of failure. One evening in 1953 when he broached the subject of his resignation to his present Meeruti wife at the dinner table, his wife objected, "Your health cannot stand the strain of politics. You should now take rest. You can not longer tire yourself out."

Fazlul Huq however could not agree with his wife. He had no doubt a great respect for her. But politics was his life. He resigned on 22nd March, 1953. Thus Fazlul Huq who remained inert politically for years suddenly roused himself to strike a fatal blow to Nurul Amin's Government. During this time Bogra Mohammad Ali, the Prime Minister telephoned Fazlul Huq at 1 A. M. at night to accept the Governorship of Sind. Bogra Mohammad Ali possibly wanted to pull him away from East Bengal politics. Fazlul Huq refused with a remark, "Our people will misunderstand me. Besides, the people need me at this juncture," Initially Fazlul Huq could not decide whether he should join the Awami League or start a new party. Some Awami Leaguers asked him to join the Awami League. In fact Abul Mansur Ahmed says, "Fazlul Huq at first decided to join the Awami League."

Fazlul Huq started his Krishak Sramik party on 27th July, 1953 a step forward from the Krishak Proja party to which he clung for years. The present political party included labourers, a recognition of new elements in the society a product of part industrialization of the country. Fazlul Huq and Bhashani decided to form the United Front. They were the first signatories to the United Front platform. Suhrawardy joined the united front later.

When the initial draft of 48 points for the manifesto was presented to Fazlul Huq, he drawled out his wisdom, "Make ten, twenty or fifty points or as many points as you like. But please remember to include what the people want."

Many thought they were only political gimmicks to please voters. But it was not the case for Fazlul Huq. When some of his disciples wondered whether they would be able to give effect to these points, Fazlul Huq comforted them by saying, "That is my business. Leave it to me."

During the election, it appeared that Fazlul Huq and Bhashani put up some private candidates against the official candidates of the united front. Fazlul Huq was sometime a problem to the office workers of the party. He once sent a telegram from the interior just before 14 days of the election, "I have nominated so and so and please announce his candidature to the press like Millat and Ittefaq." Yet it should be remembered that it was mainly due to Fazlul Huq's image that United Front had such unique and unexcelled victory. And Fazlul Huq knew it.

Fazlul Huq put up about 42 candidates at the last moment but the United Front could not accept them as official candidates because the elections were only few days away. When Fazlul Huq returned to Dhaka all these candidates virtually stormed the house of Fazlul Huq and began to pester him. Fazlul Huq then called the office secretary of the United Front and told him privately "It is all right that United Front has not changed at the last minute and taken the new ones. They are all unfit. But you must take one man at least from the whole bunch that is L. R. khan from Tangail." The office secretary said' "I shall report the matter to Bhashani and Suhrawardy." Suhrawardy and Bhashani agreed and the last minute

recommendation of Fazlul Huq was accepted.

Fazlul Huq though battered by age and events was never the less a man of prodigious energy and vitality. He toured the different places with such dash and energy that the people marveled at his capacity for hard work, will and dermination even at this age.

He had a great talent for histronics. His mobile feature could show smile on his face and at the next moment it was given to tears. When he stood up to speak during the election campaign it was a pleasure to see and hear him. Few politicians have learned to speak themselves with more articulateness, command of idiom, local dialect and punch punctuated by small anecdotes.

His son Faizul Huq now a law student who accompanied his father remembers that in one of the meetings addressed by Fazlul Huq in 1954, one old peasant came towards him for handshake and apprised him of the miserable condition of the villages and indifference of the Government. Fazlul Huq broke into sobs and the old man too started weeping. Soon the whole crowd was found to rub their moist eyes along with them. Again in another meeting when the crowd almost started weeping hearing the pathetic stories of the people ruined by the Government, he asked with a sense of humor, "Please sit down and cry."

When Fazlul Huq was at Narayanganj steamer ghat after his return from the interior he was informed of the victory of election result. He was so moved by the result that out of gratefulness his tears began to stream down his face. He only said, "I never thought that the people still loved me so much. I hope and pray I can live up to their expectation."

The election result of 1954 upset the political pattern of Pakistan. The success of the United front at the polls with an overtone of regional autonomy threatened to strike at the root of the central power and monopoly at Karachi Bogra Mohammad Ali, the pliable and disgruntled stooge of Ghulam Mohammad was asked to sort out the emerging political picture of East Pakistan and twist the result to the benefit of the Government at Karachi. Bogra Mohammad Ali, the prime minister wrote a sweet and enticing letter to Fazlul Huq eulogizing him as "the great leader of Bengal." Bogra referred to him as " the tiger of Bengal" and reminded him that Fazlul Huq should know that he was still the tiger and complimented him as " the only

man who was capable of moulding again the distinyt of Bengal." Bogra then invited him to Karachi.

In the first meeting of the three leaders- Fazlul Huq, Suhrawardy and Bhashani the inner hollowness of the unity of the united front was thrust wide open. Fazlul Huq wanted to take a particular man as a minister. To Fazlul Huq he was a must. But then Suhrawardy who found in it a sign of unreasonableness could not agree.

To stop Fazlul Huq to insist on such a move Suhrawardy pitched in his own candidate to become minister. Suhrawardy did not really want him to be a minister but due to resentment and rivalry he presented it as a counter proposal. Thus the façade of unity began to crack open not upon principle but upon selfish and petty question of selection of ministers. Unrestrained by Suhrwardy's objection, Fazlul Huq inducted himself as the chief minister along with three others as ministers-Abu Hossain Sarkar, Nanna Mia (Syed Azizul Huq) and Ashrafuddin Chowdhury.

Impulsive as he was, he declared earlier that he would form a cabinet of twenty ministers. When Awami League was left out in the cabinet Suhrawardy left for Karachi enroute to Zurich for his treatment. To Bhashani was left the responsibility of negotiating with Fazlul Huq for the induction of ministers from the Awami League. On his way to Karachi Ataur Rahman says, Fazlul Huq's effusion was perplexing. Fazlul Huq said, "People have given me votes. They have voted my boat. So I shall do what I think best." On his return from Karachi after his meeting with Bogra Mohammad Ali and Ghulam Mohammad he declared at the Dhaka airport, "I have no quarrel with the Muslim League. All has been settled." When some Muslim League M. N. A'S asked him whether they should resign. He snorted, "What is the need? I have not yet resigned?

DISMISSAL OF FAZLUL HUQ'S MINISTRY

One his way back home, Fazlul Huq stopped at Calcutta. He claimed that he was invited there. Strangely enough Fazlul Huq was received at Calcutta with tunes of Hindu devotional songs. Further, in a reception by Shanti Sena Committee it is reported that Fazlul Huq said, "I hope with the help of the people of India to remove the

artificial barriers that have been created between the two Bengals." At the Sarat Academy Fazlul Huq is alleged to have remarked, "I do not believe in the political division of a country. I am in fact not familiar with the two words, Pakistan and Hindustan."

Thirteen days later New York Times correspondent along with the representative of Reuter published an account. Fazlul Huq was reported to have said, "Independence will be one of the first things to be taken by my ministry."

When there was outcry of protest against the utterances of Fazlul Huq he said that he had been misreported by the press. On 10th May, 1954, he issued a statement, "The sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan will be defended by myself and every true Pakistani."

It is rather intriguing to find one American reporter Callahan Bending all his energy to the destruction of Fazlul Huq. But Mohammad Ali needed Callahan. Bogra used him as a stick to beat Fazlul Huq. Bogra became so desperate at the biding of Ghulam Mohammad to discredit Fazlul Huq that he made Callahan confront Huq.

Bengal will never forgive Bogra for his impudence and idiocy in judging Fazlul Huq, a loving leader of the millions of people by the words of an ordinary American reporter and then calling him a self-confessed traitor and shuffling him out of power. Karachi was furious. The vested interests there were just wanting something like that to discredit the United front Government. Pressed by gloomy forebodings from all sides he invited the Awami Leaguers to join his ministry and strengthen his hands. On the day of swearing-in ceremony horrifying riots struck the Adamjee Jute Mill at Narayanganj. The bodies of women and children were found floating on the tank, the riots at Narayanganj focused a blazing and savage spotlight on the beastlity of men.

Karachi thought that savagery was the focus of futility and helplessness of the United Front Government. The United Front thought the riot was set off by the vested interests to discredit its Government. The vested interests in Karachi which could not stop the Central Government from allowing the United Front to form the ministry now threw their weight to pull down the Government by discrediting it. The press in West Pakistan began to cry hoarse about

the conspiracy of the communists and the anti-state agents and their diabolical acts against the integrity of the country.

Fazlul Huq soon after the formation of the government set his mind to execute the twenty one points of the election manifesto. But the riots in Narayanganj upset him. Fazlul Huq was now called to Karachi. Everyone there was aghast at the barbarities in East Pakistan. Most furious was the Bengali Editor of the Dawn Newspaper-Altaf Hussain. Ataur Rahman who accompanied Fazlul Huq to Karachi relates the Following.

Fazlul Huq met Ghulam Mohammad. The Governor-General suggested, "Settle the issue and then go back. Please see that it never happens again."

Bogra Mohammad Ali advised Ataur Rahman, "Please form the Government with somebody else excluding Fazlul Huq," Ataur Rahman says, "we wondered who could form the ministry. So we had to return home. We returned to Dhaka via Calcutta. Fazlul Huq could not rest during the journey. He was too frightened to sit in the plane. He was fidgety."

Fazlul Huq asked, "Suppose if they arrest me on landing at the airport in Dhaka." It appeared his boldness and optimism had ebbed away. Ataur Rahman agreed, "Yes, that is possible."

Huq said, 'What did you say? Can they do it? Would they do it really? It seemed that Fazlul Huq was not his person any more. Due to old age his nerves had flickered. "How can I say correctly? After all we are in the air. I don't know what is happening in the earth", replied Ataur Rahman.

A.H. M. S. Doha, who happened to be with them suggested, "You should get down in Calcutta. When you see good signal from the east, you should proceed". They however disagreed. When the plane reached Dhaka they looked down at the Dhaka Airport. They found a huge crowd waiting at the Airport. They were happy to be back.

In the afternoon, it was announced through the radio, that Section 92-A had been clamped down. The Defence Secretary, Iskander Mirza was coming as the Governor replacing Choudhury

Khaliquzzman. It was broadcast through radio that the United Front Government was out. What Quaid-e-Azam had said about Fazlul Huq was all cited again. Leaflets were out; from the plane those were dropped. Thus by the end of May, 1954, the United front Government of Fazlul Huq was tossed aside to the dismay of the people in East Pakistan. The Prime Minister Bogra Mohammad Ali instead of arresting the agents of destruction took the unfortunate step of dismissing the United Front Government, a Government voted to power by the overwhelming majority of the people.

Fazlul Huq was detained in his house at K, M. Das Lane. It was rumoured that Fazlul Huq might be tried for his treason. Fazlul Huq was worried and perplexed by the ominous drift announced. "On account of my old age I am retiring from public life." Faizul Huq, his son gives an account of this period of Fazlul Huq's detention in his house, "They thought they had trapped the Tiger and would tame him in due course of time. His activities were restricted and he was practically confined to bed. All the time he was found to be praying and when someone would remind him of the prevailing situation he would simply utter, 'AZMAISH' (meaning examination)." "The house where we were living in was submerged under waist-deep flood waters. A sort of an E. P. R. camp was set up there, Where ever our eyes went we saw those faithful E. P. R. sepoys standing with their 3.3 rifles and a host of I. B Officers watching even the children playing including myself. How can I forget these things? No visitor was allowed to see him and if by chance someone came he was rudely turned back. Even my father had to offer the "EID-UL-FITR" namaz in his room. It is natural of him to break down. We for ourselves had nothing to do except to pray to Allah and my father would also recite that famous verse from the Holy Quran, La elaha-ella-anta subhanaka enni kuntum minazzoalamin."

BREAK UP OF UNITED FRONT

After the imposition of Section 92A dismissing Fazlul Huq government, Bogra Mohammad Ali came to Dhaka to explore the possibilities of restoring parliamentary Government. Bogra Mohammad Ali told Ataur Rahman that his claim as a leader of the Awami League to form the government could not be ignored but

Government had not forgotten that he had attended 'peace conference' in 1952 in Peking.

During this time Bogra Mohammad Ali visited the house of Fazlul Huq. A Milad Sharif was arranged and during this function Bogra was found cozying up to Fazlul Huq and sat next to him. Bogra was all smiles and cordiality. Now Fazlul Huq did not look like a traitor. He turned out to be more of a political guardian of Bogra Mohammad Ali.

In fact Bogra had actually come to Dhaka to have rapport with Fazlul Huq since Suhrawardy was emerging as a powerful rival of Bogra in the centre. When there was much of furtive hobnobbing between Mohammad Ali and Fazlul Huq for forming the Government in East Bengal and to keep Suhrawardy out of power, some body asked Fazlul Huq, "How is that you are allying with Mohammad Ali when he called you a traitor?" Fazlul Huq was reported to have replied, "He is the son of my friend Altaf Ali. He is not the man to let me down. It is Ghulam Mohammad."

When no confidence motion was brought against Fazlul Huq's leadership of the United Front both Moulana Bhasahni and Suhrawardy were outside the country. Moulana was in Calcutta and Suhrawardy in Zurich. It was claimed that both blessed the move. Moulana, it was told, telephoned from Calcutta. When Abul Mansur Ahmed phoned him he denied his approval of the no-confidence move and asked to pend the decision till his return to Dhaka. Moulana further said that he had written a letter to Abul Mansur Ahmed at Mymensingh address but the letter was never received. It was at first informed by the General Secretary of Awami League that the no-confidence move was not brought by the Awami League but by the United Front itself. Some of the Awami Leaguers then wanted freedom of action and to decide as they wished. Ultimately the Awami Leaguers were given mandate to vote against Fazlul Huq after sanction from the working committee.

The historic meeting to rupture the United Front was held in February, 1955 in the refreshment room of Provincial Assembly. An attempt was however made by the moderate elements to hold together the United Front but unfortunately the extremists won.

Tarkabagish was made president by the Awami League. Fazlul Huq, an ageing and kindly veteran of many political battles sat disconsolate and glum on one side of the crowd. His supporters protested and stressed that Fazlul Huq remained the president. Thus absurdity overtook the situation Here was a meeting of M.P.A.'S belonging to the United Front presided over by two men, one Tarkabagish and another Fazlul Huq. Soon a no-confidence motion against Huq was proposed by the Awami League group. It set off uproar and confusion in the meeting and during this melee Tarkabagish declared that the motion had been passed. Fazlul Huq, the other president declared that the motion had not been passed.

Each party claimed its victory. Next day in the newspapers each party brought out the list of their supporters, each claiming that their party commanded the majority. Soon the signed papers started coming out. Common names were found in both the rival lists.Thus the United front was unhinged and fell apart into original major constituents Krishak Sramik (Peasants and workers) party and Awami League.

The three leaders Fazlul Huq, Suhrawardy and Bhashani must take the burden of history's shame for the break down of the United Front platform. The United Front symbolized the people's enthusiasm, hope and expectation. It was born on the debris of Nurul Amin's Government. To the people Nurul Amin was a spineless agent of the central government ever ready to succumb to their will and threats. But then the breakup of the United Front was a testimony to their cynical regard to the hopes and wishes of the people. To them the United Front was the glow of hope and optimism that swept throughout the glow of hope and optimism that swept throughout the countryside. But now it began to flicker at the whims, rivalry and cynicism of their leaders.

FEW MORE YEARS OF POWER

Chowdhury Mohammad Ali took over as a Prime Minister on 10th August, 1955, Krishak Sramik party with its thirteen members joined Chowdhury Mohammad Ali's government. Fazlul Huq

became the Minister of Interior and later of Education. During this period his son who accompanied Fazlul Huq says, "As the minister of interior and later education he had little to do but his main contribution was the framing of the memorable 1956 constitution along with Chowdhury Mohammad Ali, late Dr. Khan Shaheb and few other personalities. Day and night he worked. I was at Karachi with him all these days. He had to play a dual role because at times he had to create a proper atmosphere wherein the opposition and those in position would both agree. It was then that his health for the first time showed signs of breakdowns."

The 1956 constitution is a far cry from the Lahore Resolution moved by Fazlul Huq himself. But the country was for a while happy since after nine years of bickering and futility, at last a constitution had been completed. It might however be said that on the question of parity he did not relent. He was strongly opposed to the Murree Pact and refused to sign it. He reasoned that the condition prevailing at the time of the Lucknow Pact was quite different from the condition prevailing now. He maintained that he had no right to sacrifice the interest of the Muslims of East Bengal and convert the majority to equality for all times to come. He did not sign himself and did not allow other membes of the Krishak Sramik Party to subscribe to. He warned those who signed it against future conseqrences which would mean betrayal of East Pakistan's interest.

Further when Governor General Ghulam Mohammad dissolved the old Constituent Assembly there was a proposal to get a Constitution Convention elected and for the election even nomination papers were invited. The Sher-e-Bangala set his foot against it and declared unless it was constituent assemblies with all its power new old boycott it.

The story has it that Iskander Mirza, the Interior Minister, came down to Dhaka to persuade Fazlul Huq to agree to the constitution convention. In fact Iskander held a meeting with some of the lwaders of Krishak Sramik party in the Government house. Next day the working committee of the KSP held its meeting in the residence of Fazlul Huq and deeidcd to boycott the Convention and parity proposal. The Convention was however revoked on 10th April, 1955 on the verdict of the Federal Court that Governor General had no

power to constitute a convention in place of constituent assembly.

The Awami League was not happy with Fazlul Huq for his joining Mohammad Ali's cabinet. Abul Mansur Ahmed writes in his book, 'Fifty' years of Politics as I saw it,' "Both the Awami League and Krishak Sramik party members lived either in Somerset house or nearby Baluch mess and we offered KSP members to abide by the five point Murree Pact. But they were busy to be installed as ministers. They thought that our proposal was to put bottlenecks in their plan. Only Hamidul Huq Chowdhury and Mohan Mia of the KSP regarded our proposal as genuine. When Fazlul Huq brushed aside their suggestion Mohan Mia was very sorry and Hamidul Huq declined to bee minister.

After completion of the constitution Fazlul Huq was sworn in as the Governor of East Bengal. He was happy to be back in Dhaka. His role as a Governor was very controversial. The Krishak Sramik Party was still drawing its sustenance from the image of Fazlul Huq as its leader. Whether the dismissal of Ataur Rahman ministry was the manifestation of partisan spirit or his genuine conviction that the latter had lost majority in the assembly, one could only speculate..

The central Government of Feroz Khan Noon was not however silent to the development in East Bengal. Feroz Khan Noon's ministry was propped up by the support of the Awami League. So it was not difficult for the Awami League to take swift vengeance against Fazlul Huq.

Unceremoniously Fazlul huq was informed one night that he was dismissed as the Governor for some of his "unparliamentary" acts. Thus in September, 1958 ended the stormy career of Fazlul Huq, a veteran leader of sixty years of politics.

The end was so dramatic, unpredictable and dismaying that few knew that it was the last office for Fazlul Huq to hold. It was a poignant sight to see Fazlul Huq leave the Government house. He would only mutter, "Thank God I have at K.M. Das Lane otherwise I would not know where to go at this hour of the night."

When Fazlul Huq went to his own house at K.M.Das Lane, his

health began to fail. After a few days of initial shock and anduish he recovered and braced himself up to serve the nation again. At the instance of KSP men he assumed the leadership of the party and preened himself to face the election to be held sometime in February of 1959. But before the election was held the country was swept by the deluge of October, 1958 (martial law) with unknowable consequences for the destiny of Pakistan.

HIS LAST DAYS

Sometime in 1960 I visited the bare and austere house of Fazlul Huq at 27, K.M. Das Lane. The ground floor was bereft of any furniture. It looked as if the residents had just left the house leaving few screwed up papers here and there. I climbed up the narrow stair case and went into the small room overlooking the pond where Fazlul Huq sat on the edge of his bed. I saw a legendary figure almost an institution for us. As I looked at him I always felt here was a man, a giant of a man born once in a century. I could see and feel the history of Bengal.

There he sat –a kindly and flabby mass of flesh battered by old age. His features were agreeable but his face was so lined that the skin looked in places as if it were wrinkled parchment. As one looked more closely into his face and watched its movements, its brightness and attraction became evident. Few grey flecks of hair sat carelessly on his big head.

During the period of senility, there were moments when the nerves of Fazlul Huq flickered. During his youth, he of course presented the image of a bright, nimble, self confident and a comprehending being. I bent down to touch his feet as a mark of respect. He would only mutter his inaudible words of blessings.

On the bare western wall hang a picture. I asked him what it was. His eyes gleamed and he unrolled his story of joining the Round Table Conference, the story of grand reception in England. I felt he was carrying me down to the past, to the heyday of his glory, himself in living contact with it all. Here in this old inconspicuous house Fazlul Huq fought battles for his life. Tears were his constant

companion. Death seemed to hover around him. His daily routine was to move to the next room for his prayer by balancing his steps by holding the shoulders of his servant.

The pathos of the whole situation must be overwhelming. Here was a giant who shone under the limelight of frenzied public adoration for sixty years and now he was a helpless and a pathetic figure of a man with a blank and sagging face. He would often tell he would not live long and that he wanted to die a peaceful death. He was convinced that he would never recover but he was not bitter or despaired. He would only say, "Oh God take me away."

During his last days, he became sentimental. He began to remember his childhood days and pined for the scenic beauties of Barisal. As days passed by his memory was failing. He would lose track of his thought and mumble incoherent words wondering off from one topic to another and would suddenly stop trying to recollect what he was saying one moment back. Sometime he would tell the visitors how much he loved the students and would say, "Please tell them to pray for me." Then he would break into sobs. Tears would stream down his furrowed cheeks. "Ask my countrymen to pray for me," he would say.

Death walked upon Fazlul Huq with all ceremonial afflictions of old age. He was taken to the hospital on March,28, 1962 following an attack of ureamia. The cubicle where Fazlul Huq was placed looked far too small and here he was fighting his last battle for his life. Fazlul Huq was fatalist. He was upset to find his golden ring missing from is left hand. He always believed that it brought good luck. He now realized that the end was near.

During his month longstay in the hospital, there were occasional signs of improvement but the disease relapsed frequently. During the better period of his consciousness he remembered the country, the people and their plight. Distressed by the politics of Ayub regime it is told he said, "Oh God I do not want to live in a country where I have no vote. Please take me away."

On Wednesday April 25 the health bulletin issued by the hospital announced that condition was critical. From Thursday he

some times lapsed into a state of semiun consciousness. On Friday morning there was no sign of improvement. In the morning he had a glass of horlicks. The first sign of unconsciousness came at 9.30 A.M. Begum Fazlul Huq who was at the bedside was told of the agony by the movement of his hands. Some time later he heaved a sigh followed by two shorter ones and then came the end on 27th April.. The lips which once swayed millions hung open. The eyes which held the crowd in loving care lay half closed seeing nothing, never to see anything again. His son who could not be at his bed side says ruefully, "It is an irony of fate that I could not be by his side when he died, but I am told he uttered my name just before God summoned him. When I rushed to hospital, he was already dead. For a few moments I could not cry. I was absolutely dumbfounded. I could not believe. Nothing could be done. It was all natural. I could only raise my head and with my hands folded pray to God to rest his soul in peace. My father had died, a legend had died, a great father had died, to millions 'HUQ SAHEB' had died. I knew I was not only the loser. The whole country mourned his death and this was the only one consolation."

Thus ended the career of a man at the age of 89 , who had been a splendid specimen of humanity and a legend in his life time. The life study of Fazlul Huq is the history of the renaissance movement of Muslim Bengal. In fact he said "I am the living history of Bengal for the last sixty years."

Few men have done so much for so many. If we travel across of the pages of our recorded history of Bengal we cannot find a man who can excel him in magnificence of heart. It can safely be said that no man tried more, gave more, dared more and sacrificed more for the Muslims of Bengal.

HUSEYN SHAHEED SUHRAWARDY
(1892-1963)

A born leader of men Suhrawardy was a man of fine breed, brain and bounce. Squat and potbellied yet handsome Suhrawardy had the face and manners of an aristocrat. In fact he came of an aristocratic family of Midnapur offshoot of a Persian family. A Barrister of nimble brain, he successively climbed to the highest offices both in undivided Bengal and in Pakistan by sheer force of his ability and brilliance.

You could easily dislike him if you did not know him enough. He was incontestably the most live, sparkling, lovable and imperious character in our politics. He was all politeness but then it was a times edged with haughtiness. A brilliant orator, unrivalled organizer and a little wayward Suhrawardy was intensely conscious of his own ability and had penchant for power. He could dislike but he could never hate. He could be morose or merry, unpredictable or uncontrollable but never petty. There was something like excellence and grandeur in the composition of his character. Those who knew him intimately adored him for magnificence of his heart. Behind the occasional rude exterior there lived a man who was at once charming and magnetic. The traditional politicians however could not forgive his hauteur and recoiled at his undisciplined life.

In one instance he could maul a politician then had him work under him with steadfast loyalty. Suhrawardy was pragmatic and perceptive tempered by history. Yet he could also he naive. He thought whatever might happen to the politics of the country the army groomed in British tradition would sit silent and watch.

He was at times the most difficult, most refractory and the most engaging human being. He was the farthest removd from the common run of politicians. In mind he was always young but he inspired the feeling that he possessed the wisdom and sanity of the ages. His courtship of youth was transparent and at times excessive.

They had free access to his house at all hours of the day and night. They were his friends and his political base. He was at times discourteous and abrupt with them; yet they loved him and felt amused by his rudeness.

There is an interesting anecdote about him. Once a few students approached him for subscription to stage a function in the University. When they met him in his sitting room and handed in the invitation envelope and wait for payment he was most impatient and began shouting, "Why have you come? Do you think I have no other use of money? I can not pay anything." He went on repeating almost curses at them and moved away with the invitation card. After a while he returned and asked them to take back the envelope. The students were hurt and angry. They wanted to tear the envelope but then they felt something soft and swollen and opened to find that there was a wad of notes of five hundred rupees.

He had deep sympathy for his political workers and disciples. A man of integrity he had least personal interest in affluence or riches but he sometimes went out of his way to help his political workers or party men even at the cost of his own reputation. Among his friends he found in Dhaka in 1949 were some young students of Calcutta days who orbited around him owing to his irresistible and magnetic charm. His temper was unpredictable, at times brooding and introspective and at other times he was most charming, at ease with himself and talking to his friends for hours. At times of great triumph in his political career he was drunk with supreme self confidence and at times of defeat he took it with agreeable unconcern.

He could not stand shabbiness, stupidity and double talk. One would be struck by the expression of disdain and dislike which passed swiftly across his face. Once he turned out an MPA from his room in the Circuit House in Dhaka for his clumsy look and shabbiness. His mouth alone broke the regularity of his feature and registered his thoughts and feelings. At its best it expressed determined purpose, at its worst storms of passion gathered about it. On those occasions one saw him a different person. But after bit one knew, the real man was there all the time, hiding behind a curtain. All the more agreeable it was when he came out.

Suhrawardy was intensely a human being. He loved life itself and exposed himself liberally to its demands. The story has it that when he was a chief minister of undivided Bengal after disposing of his duties of the state he would free himself in the evening and dance till the early hours of the morning in the European Clubs in Calcutta. He liked photography. Even when he went to the foreign countries he carried his favorite camera. He was not like others, arid in temperament, frugal in habit. He was a resonant human being with a delight in the life of the senses. When he went to jail in 1962 he carried with him phonographic records, books and a tape recorder.

There was a strange quality in him. He was a mixture of remarkable energy and bouts of laziness. This is fantastic but true. He was not alone in history. Hitler was one. Nepolean was another; Suhrawardy was sometimes slothful and hated to get up early in the morning. Suhrawardy was no doubt a kindly friend, a loving father and a generous party man. But as a husband he was undomesticated and given to marital neglect. Sir Abdur Rahim did not like this wily son-in-law Suhrawardy. Once he had seen the fury of Sir Abdur Rahim. In one meeting called by Fazlul Huq few already gathered and Sir Abdur Rahim was already there too. He talked about Suhrawardy critically. When Suhrawardy arrived at the meeting his friends informed him of Sir Rahim's criticism. Suhrawardy stood up and said, "Sir Abdur Rahim has been unkind to me." No sooner had he finished the sentence, Sir Abdur Rahim sprang to his feet, his face blazing in anger and snapped "Suhrawardy Am I unkind to you? Who made your father a justice? I did it."

Suhrawardy did not have many secrets. One secret that he conserved steadfastly was the up bringing of his son. The Dhaka crowd saw this young, handsome and elegant son of Suhrawardy when he was carrying the bier of his father in a truck from the Airport. The second wife of Suhrawardy, the mother of his son was a Russian lady who had a strange career of her own. She left her native country Rassia, got married to a Czech doctor and drifted around Europe and ultimately settled in England. But the doctor was a man of shiftless character. As a physician he was ineffective and was always in want. Sometime in 1941, this lady became the secretary to Hasan Suhrawardy in London and came to Calcutta with him. Shaheed Suhrawardy, nephew of Hasan Suhrawardy got friendly

with this lady and wanted to marry her. She went to 'Baro' Mosque and was converted to Islam and kept Nurjahan as her muslim name. The conversion of this lady to Islam was supposed to annul the marriage to her first husband. Suhrawardy then married her. The doctor began to write to this lady repudiating the divorce and started to blackmail her to realize money. A few years later, when Suhrawardy divorced her she did not accept the divorce. She carried her passport as Mrs. Suhrawardy and whether in U.S.A or U.K. she often tried to get help from Suhrawardy who helped her and also for the maintenance of the child.

EARLY LIFE

Suhrawardy's forbear originally came from Persia. It is told that his encestors during Shah Shuja's time came to Bengal to preach Islam. The prince Shuja liked this family and gave them enough lands to settle in Midnapur to preach and revitalize Islam in this part of Hindu packed Bengal.

In later day life when Suhrawardy's friends asked him to have some urban property in Dhaka, he would only protest and say, "May forefathers were pirs. We have no interest in property." At the age of 18, he proceeded to England for his education in Oxford. His father who was an advocate, also accompanied the son to be called to the Bar from Inner Temple. His father returned home soon after completing his Barriser-at-law and entered as a judge of theSmall Cause court in Calcutta.

Suhrawardy stayed on in England for his B.Sc. B.C.L. from Oxford and earned the professional degree of Barrister-at-Law from the Inner temple. He returned home in 1920 and in those days there was none who could match him in education or breed from Muslim Bengal. But then Suhrawardy's life was a series of contradiction or you may call it a shining story of aberration.

Soon after his return from U. K. he settled on a sin to his liking mixing with the men of the underworld of Calcutta. The sin was just not that simple. To mix with that sort of people one needed a big heart. And he had doubtlessly a very big one. Here during this period he peered in to the life of the proletariat of Calcutta. For a

time he was drawn towards them and set about the task of organizing the labour, It was only for a brief period. He was no labour leader. He was too much of an aristocrat to understand the seamy sides of their lives. He was the son of a Sir, brother of a Sir, nephew of a Sir and son-in-law of a Sir, yet he could be himself with the men of lowest strata of the society. In later days theChief minister Suhrawardy did not forget them. Once he was returing from a hotel near Sealdah addressing a meeting of the Muslim League workers. On the way he stopped before a 'pan and Biri' shop (corner shop selling cheap cigarette made from cut tobacco rolled in leaf and betel leaves).. He came out of the car and started talking with the shop keeper in a way that surprised his escorts.

Suhrawardy asked, "How are you?" and continued his talk as an old friend and for a while forgot that he was the chief Minister and felt him self as one of them. The man said, "Saheb, I have lost Rs.20/- in the race and can't dare go home to face the wife." Suhrawardy took the pan in his hand and passed notes of Rs.20/- to the shop keeper. The man stared at the Chief Minister and was too overwhelmed to thank him. He made himself an instant leader with the population of Muslims of Calcutta by his buoyancy, dash, large heartedness and above all his family name Suhrawardy. Like Fazlul Huq who captured the hearts of the peasants by his human sympathy and his oratry, Suhrawardy too captured the downtrodden urban crowd of Calcutta. Their appeal was incontestable. Their charm was magical and the same. Only their spheres were different and their life's attitude conflicting.

SOURCES OF HIS POWER

What were the sources of his powers and his hold upon the people though Suhrawardy was not made of their stuff and could not even speak their language?

The sources of his strength were numerous. Consider. First is his sacrifice for the cause of Pakistan. The general election of 1946 was a test for the birth of Pakistan. If the Muslim League went down in that election that was the end of Pakistan and those were the critical days for Pakistan Movement.

Akram Khan, the president of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League left for Madhupur, a hill station in Bihar, for reasons of health. Sir Nazimuddin, the leader of th parliamentary party had gone toLondon to understand the British attitude and policy. There was none except Suhrawardy to look after the election. It had to be won if the fate of ninety million Muslims was to be saved. It was Suhrawady and Abul Hashem, secretary of the provincial Muslim League who organized the campaign with zeal and determination and stumped the countryside day in and day out and carried the message of Pakistan.

Look at the self confidence and humour of Suhrawardy even during those days. There was no candidate to pit against Nowsher Ali, a veteran Congress leader. He put up one Awal Moulvi against him. In the election campaign, he said, "Here is a Banana tree but vote for him if you want Pakistan." Awal Moulvi was elected. The League had a resounding victory and captured 96.7% of Muslim seats in the Legislative Assembly and laid the foundation for the creation of Pakistan.

Consider too his courage and feeling for the Muslims. The Congress had entered the Interim Government on the 12th Aug., 1946, without the Muslim League joining in. out of resentment the Muslim League declared Direct Action Day on th 16th August. The whole city of Calcutta was plunged in to the holocaust of Hindu - Muslim slaughter. The Muslims being only 24% of the population were naturally the worst victims.

Suhrawardy aghast at the barbarities called the Inspector General of Police Taylor who pleaded ignorance and said that the intelligent branch of the police which was manned by the Hindus, had betrayed the Government. Suhrawardy having lost the confidence in the police decided to sit in the police control office at Lalbazar, take the phone and direct the operations himself. He prowled in the streets of Calcutta alone in a jeep unarmed and unprotected to save the Muslims from riot and rampage. Had he not acted the Muslims of Calcutta might have been completely annihilated.

Suhrawardy was a source of great strength to the Muslims of Calcutta. His name struck terror in to the hearts of the communal

Hindus. Suhrawardy was the darling of the Muslims in those dark days of Calcutta. Viceroy Lord Wavell visited Calcutta on the 25th August to see the aftermath of the 'great killing' as the Statesman paper put it. Suhrawardy discussed the matter in detail and convinced him that the co-operation of the Muslim League was essential to save India from the horrors of civil war. Viceroy had asked Suhrawardy to act as an emissayt between the Viceroy and Jinnah. Suhrawardy met Jinnah and Wavell on different occasions and arranged their meeting, which ultimately culminated in the Muslim League's participation in the Interim Government. Jinnah had admitted that, "Suhrawardy had saved the country from the disaster."

His was the lone voice of opposition after the creation of Pakistan. He built up a secular organization called Awami League which challenged and overwhelmed the monolithic Muslim League in East Pakistan. As an opposition leader he was a stabilising factor to the excesses of the Government. Even as a lawyer Suhrawardy had few equals. In the courts it was a treat to see him how he showed leagal acumen while clashing with the opponent.

Had he decided to make law profession as his career, he would have emerged as a lawyer of unequalled excellence. He was a lawyer part time. Yet he showed flashes of legal wits which the reputed masters of the line could not match. Once he was pitted against noted lawyer A.K. Brohi in a state acquisition case in East Bengal. Suhrawardy's case was weak. A.K. Brohi in a party in the Government house, Dhaka casually told a disciple of Suhrawardy. "Mr. Suhrawardy has no case at all. It will collapse within five minutes," the more intense and determined his face looked.

Suhrawardy went to the court early and before the judges could sit on the bench, he stood up and started speaking without giving first chance to Brohi. He began to hammer down the points. It was hopeless case but Suhrawardy pondered, persevered and persuaded the Judges to think afresh from an opposite angle. And it clinched. Suhrawardy won.. Brohi congratulated Suhrawardy.

HIS POLITICS IN BENGAL

He made his first assault on the caprice and communal grouping of Hindus in the Calcutta Corporation by boycotting the election of 1936. Suhrawardy along with some Muslim friends organized the boycott so successfully that Subhas Chandra Bose, a romantic hero of Bengal politics, was appalled. In fact 98% of the Muslim voters abstained from voting. By 1936, the Muslim League which was born in 1906 in Dhaka with fan fare was all but dead. The annulment of partition of Bengal in 1911 hastened the decline of the Muslim League. The Muslim Leage presided over by the colorful persons lingered on for sometime only to lift their timid voice to ameliorate the grievances of the Muslims. But it never brushed against the mighty British Government since the interests of the leaders were intertwined with those of the British.

Fazlul Huq and then Suhrawardy came to the firmament of Bengal politics, firstly as rebel and secondly as politician. Suhrawardy along with some other men like Nazimuddin and Akram khan formed the United Muslim Party. They groomed them selves for the next election set in the constitutional process of 1935. The election of 1937 must be faced with all the resources the organized Muslim power could furnish – thought Suhrawardy. During this period Quaid-e-Azam stepped in and came to Calcutta primarily at the invitation of Matin Choudhury of Sylhet and at the behest of Jinnah the United Muslim party merged with All India Muslim League. The Muslim League confronted the Krishad Proja rarty of Fazlul Huq in the election of 1937. After the election Suhrawardy joined the coalition cabinet of Fazlul Huq as a minister of labour. His efficiency, breeziness and impudence brought confidence to the Muslims of Calcutta, long smarting under the superiority of Hindus.

In 1941 when the Muslim League at the instance of Jinnah went over to the opposition Suhrawardy beeame the hard core of the opposition bench. .Shyama- Fazlul Huq's ministry wobbled along for some time butgave way to the Muslim League which was building then into a great all India organization. When the Muslim League Government was formed in 1943 the leadership and ordanising ability of Suhrawarky would have swayed the field for him but due to the tacit support of all India Muslim League and also due to the

support of the merchant community including the Europeans, Nazimuddin was commissioned as the chief minister. The Governor of Bengal Sir John Herbert liked Suhrawardy, his dash and competence. He wanted Suhrawardy to take over the ministry of civil supplies. Meanwhile the horror of starvation struck Bengal in 1943 taking a tool of fifty lacs (five million) of people. The scorched earth policy of the British Government accounted much for it against the possible Japanese invasion.

Suhrawardy in an interview with a special correspondent of the "Bombay chronicle" said, "The government of India is to be blamed for the catastrophe……." and further added "We could get nothing from the Government of India to distribute" Suhrawardy moved heaven and earth to solve the situation but the problem was so ponderous that he could not do much. In a statement issued on 7th of May, 1943 he said:

"I have already warned all hoarders including the agriculturist hoarders that if they do not bring their stock into the market they will lose in the long run. I am determined to use all the powers to see that these hoards are disgorged and preliminary steps, which these gentlemen may find drastic, have already been taken. I am giving a chance to the people to do it voluntarily, while I perfect my plans to make them disgorge the hoards. If they do not listen to my warning, let them not think that they can run their hoards underground or that they will be able to succeed in dissipating the hoards."

When he became chief minister after the election of 1946, he was faced with grisly riots that marked the baleful history of Indian politics and paved the way for the partition of India.

He did not have restful days as the chief minister. The "Great killing" swept the city of Calcutta making it a savage spotlight of human misery and degradation. Suhrawardy's heart always beat faster for the Muslims. Only people in close intimacy knew how much he felt for them. Whenever possible, he saw to it that the Bengali Muslims already suffering from the malignancy of Hindus did get some relief.

As a chief minister of Bengal, he inevitably and cleverly sought to help out the Muslims even if he had to go out of his way

sometimes. Communal riot had broken out on the 19th May, 1946 in Dhaka and the horrible killing continued for a couple of months. The Government decided to inflict punitive tax on the locality. The then District Magistrate, Beg fixed a flat rate on all irrespective of the wealth and religion. For Hindus wealthy as they were, it was not difficult to pay but it was not so for poor Muslims. They only fled from their hearth and home to avoid the tax. When the Muslim leaders brought this fact to the notice of the Chief Minister Suhrawardy, he ordered that only people paying a tax of Rs.5/- or more should be required to pay this punitive tax.

With this fiat the poor Muslims got the relief but It Annoyed the Hindus. Their leaders like Sirish Chatterjee and few others approached the prime minister with the complaint. Suhrawardy argued that the tax was not really the penalty but it was necessary for maintaining special police to guard these affected area. The inhabitants of this area should naturally bear the burden of the expenses. The Muslims were too poor to pay this tax and they were willing to go to jail rather than pay this heavy tax. Suhrawardy shrewdly however gave them an alternative. If they were unwilling to pay the tax, special police should be appointed from the people of these areas to maintain peace. Hindu leaders realized that in either of the cases, the Muslims were beneficiaries. They felt bogged down and never pursued the matter.

Among the Hindu leaders of Bengal, Kiran Shankar Roy was nearest to him. But his fidelity to the Muslims was in no way deflected by his friendship with this Hindu leader. After the Direct Action Day meeting that was addressed by Suhrawardy the great killing was launched by Hindus and it swept over the city of Calcutta in all its hideous fury. Suhrawardy was deeply over whelmed by the sense of shock.

To bring about the peace and to safeguard the Muslim minority Suhrawardy, the chief minister appointed about 1,200 Muslim constables from Punjab. They were all non-Bengalees and as such anathema to Kiran Shankar Roy.. They badgered Suhrawardy for his partiality and declared that these Muslims had been brought to kill Hindus. Loudmouthed Kiran Shankar Roy did not stop at that. He went to the English Governor and complained. The Governor had

however asked him to see the Prime Minister Suhrawardy.

Kiran Shankar Roy met Suhrawardy in the assembly house of Calcutta. Suhrawardy slyly said if the leader of the opposition Roy wanted to remove all the non-Bengalee constables, he was ready to do so and sign the agreement. Roy was tricked and gumbled since the non-Bengalee constables were the Gurkhas and Bihari Hindus as well. Roy understood his own folly and never again raised the topic..

As he was riding high pacifying the turmoil in Bengal, partition of India with unknowable consequences took place in 1947. Just on the eve of creation of Pakistan Suhrawardy was the chief minister of undivided Bengal and it was his natural hope that he would succeed as the chief minister of East Bengal, the new province of Pakistan. But the high priests of the Muslim League decided otherwise. They wanted to elect Nazimuddin and ever obedient and pliable man to be the leader of the Muslim League party and the chief minister designate of East Bengal.

It was possibly the restless spirit, the relentless drive for power and at times the unpredictable mood of Suhrawardy that incurred the wrath of the Muslim League hierarchy, vis-à-vis the weakness, faithfulness and loyalty of Nazimuddin that tipped in latter's favour. If Suhrawardy would have survived as the chief minister of East Bengal the course of history might have been different. Our position regarding the partition of assets might have been better; so could be the demarcation of boundary by the Radcliff mission.

AS A LEADER IN PAKISTAN

Suhrawardy's leadership was shot through with paradoxes. He was not a revolutionary. He was more of a liberal democrat devoted to high ideals and half measures. He did not really hope to abolish the system, only to temper it. Though he represented the rage and resentment of East Bengal, it was diluted the moment he reached the shores of West Pakistan. He was at his best a sophisticated democrat and a lovable all Pakistani leader and at his worst he was a prig and an autocrat. Mark the contradiction. His followers believed in complete autonomy.

He did not. The twenty one point manifesto of the United Front

was the crush of his immediate followers. But he never warmed towards it. He connived and stayed silent at some of the twenty one points of the manifesto he did not approve during the 1954 election. His followers could sacrifice their lives to made Bengali as one of the state languages. He wanted at heart English to be the state language. He could not believe that either Urdu or Bengali could be the state language for the entire Pakistan. Neither could he believe that Urdu and Bengali could be two effective state languages for Pakistan. He always thought language issue was an unnecessary political problem whipped up too early when other momentous issues remained unrevsolved. He pleaded parity writing off political lives of excess one million people in East Pakistan to resolve the deadlock for th sake of a constitution, but it left behind a sore in the minds of his followers. He tried to blunt the rough edges of the extremist Awami Leaguers and hew them to move with the West Pakistanis. But he failed. Yet with all these paradoxes and differences he remained their undisputed leader and a darling. That was his genius and you may call it greatness.

As an opposition leader, he was a dogged fighter, a sophisticated democrat and relentless battler for the cause of autonomy. But in power he was somewhat a different man, an autocrat, a wily administrator, who silenced his critics by wave of his hand saying that ninety eightpercent autonomy for East Pakistan had been achieved. To him, urge for autonomy was a political move to spark the support of the East Pakistanis and the sudden repudiation of autonomy was a political twist to please the West Pakistanis. He was torn between the conflicting demands of the people of two wings. He tried at both and succeeded in neither.

SUHRAWARDY IN DELHI CONVENTION, 1946.

Fazlul Huq moved the Lahore resolution in 1940. But at the biding of Jinnah it was Suhrawardy who among others indirectly squashed the independent sovereign states of Lahore resolution in favour of one separate state of Pakistan in the legislature's convention in Delhi in 1946.

Suhrawardy in moving there solution said, "In the vast

subcontinent of India a hundred million Muslims are the adherents of a faith which regulates every department of his lime –educational, social, economic and political- whose code is not confined merely to spiritual doctrines and tenets or rituals and ceremonies and which stands in sharp contrast to the exclusive nature of Hindu religion and philosophy which has fostered and maintained for thousands of years a rigid caste system resulting in their degradation of sixty million human beings to the position of untouchables , creation of unnatural barriers between man and man and superimposition of social and economic inequalities on a large body of the people of this country and which threatens to reduce Muslims, Christians and other minorities to the status of irredeemable helots socially and economically. Different historical backgrounds, traditions, cultures and social and economic orders of the Hindus and the Muslims have made impossible the evolutions of a single Indian nation inspired by common aspirations and ideals."

He added, "Britain wants to hand over power to the Indians and the cabinet mission is here to find out suitable machinery for the transfer of power. Congress tells the British-(Give us power. We shall sweep all opposition. We shall suppress the Muslims. We shall bring the scheduled castes to heel and we shall annihilate the Adibasis. Give us the police, your army and we shall reproduce an Armageddon in the name of a united India.) This I call insanity, insanity induced by the lust for power. We do not in end to start a civil war but we want a land where we can live in peace. We are a nation and we believe we have something to contribute to the civilizations of the world. *But are the British and the Congress prepared to give us Pakistan peacefully and with grace?* I have long pondered over these questions. Let me now honestly declare that every Muslim of Bengal is ready and prepared to lay down his life for Pakistan. Now I call upon you Mr. Jinnah, to test us."

There is and element of tragic contradiction in the life and leadership of Suhrawardy. Lahore resolutions with its proposal for sovereign independent states lay buried during this Convention, though the theme of sovereign states in Pakistan still lingers nostalgically in the rank and file of his East Pakistani followers. There was a ripple of protest against Suhrawardy's attempt alter the character of the Lahore Resolution led by the provincial general

secretary Abul Hashem.. But Jinnah's prestige with the legislatures was too overwhelming. Possibly, Jinnah thought that the situation in India was too tense and compelling to demand for two Pakistans. Any separatist tendency to fester within the Muslim ranks would have swept aside the Pakistan movement in view of the caprice of the Hindus and the indifference of the British.

PLEA FOR A SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT BENGAL

Suhrawardy had been a prominent member of all India Muslim League besides being the chief minister of undivided Bengal. Jinnah's early assertion not to accept "moth- eaten and truncated Pakistan" and subsequent realisation for settlement of Hindu-Muslim problem disappointed Suhrawardy.

Faced with the prospect of partition of Bengal, a prospect which grieved his heart, Suhrawardy raised the slogan for undivided sovereign Bengal, which would decide later whether it would opt for Pakistan or India or remain independent. Prominent Hindu Leaders likeSarat Bose, brother of Subhas Chandra Bose and Kiran Sankar Roy lent their support to this venture.

From time immemorial, Bengal had shown separatist tendency. Isolated by its turbulent rivers, Bengal had evolved upon its own ways – away from the mainstream ofIndian life. Isolation had brought about linguistic variation and regional character. In recent times, the Hindus of Bengal had been impatient of economic ascendancy of the Marwris and Punjabi Hindus in their province. So the cry for a separate homeland for the Bengalees was neither unpopular nor unhistorical for Hindu Bengal.

Suhrawardy raised the cry of a "sovereign, independent and undivided Bengal in a divided India." The proposal was made at a press conference on 27th April, 1947. Suhrawardy had declared, " It will be a great country indeed, the richest and the most prosperous in India, capable of giving to its people a high standard of living,where a great people a high standard of living, where a great people will ber able to rise to the fullest height of their stature, a land that will try to rise to the fullest height of their stature, a land that will try to be plentiful. It will be rich in agriculture, rich in industry and commerce and incourse of time it will be one of the most

powerful and progressive states of the world."

He concluded saying further, "I shall never forget how long it took for the the Government of India to realize the famine conditions in Bengal in the yeat 1943, how in Bengal's dire need it was denied foodgrains by the neighbouring province of Assam, Bihar, how since then every single province of India has closed its doors and deprived Bengal is relegated to undignified corner while other provinces wield undue influence."

Again in reply to Gandhi's claim that the "root of Bengali and Indian culture is the Upanishada and as such Bengal cannot be cut off from India." Suhrawardy countered in a statement on May 15, 1947, saying, "It is a mistake to think that Bengal culture is pure Hindu culture based solely on Upanishada. Bengali culture has a cosmopolitan aspect with a touch of humanism. That explains why rigours of caste system, untouchability do not find congenial soil in Bengal. Islamic influence on Bengal has been profound." During this period at Howrah Railway station Suhrawardy was asked by a reporter why he believed in sovereign independent Bengal changing his earlier Pakistani stand. He replied crisply, "The circumstances have changed." Suhrawardy did not elaborate further.

Hindus led by Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and even Nehru wanted the partition of Bengal. His admirers say that Suhrawardy devised a plan to keep united sovereign Bengal for a while and then bring it to the fold of Pakistan. He approached Sarat Bose and Kiran Sanker Roy and proposed that Bengal should be left undivided and either would remain independent or join India or Pakistan . Sarat Bose was asked to get approval of the Congress. But the Congress refused.

This move of Suhrawardy was too much of a strain upon the patience of Jinnah of Liaquat Ali Khan. They after painful effort and mass movement of years were at last approaching the fateful destiny of the Muslims –their promised land of Pakistan. They viewed this sudden clamour for sovereign Bengal as a stab in the back of the Muslims, a clumsy effort to perpetuate Suhrawardy's unrivalled leadership of Independent Bengal. The move of Suhrawardy was anathema to Jinnah and he spurned the offer of Suhrawardy and his Hindu friends with a cool and crisp disdain. The prospect of

sovereign Bengal died out like the effervescence of a fickle and futile idea. Thijs is the beginning of antipathy of Jinnah and Liaquat Ali towards Suhrawardy.

Thr admirers of Suhrawardy however say that the scheme of independent and sovereign Bengal was blessed by Jinnah and Liaquat Ali. This is probably not true. What possibly Jinnah wanted was the undivided Bengal within the fabric of Pakistan; and he called the partijtion of the province "a sinister move actuated by spite and bitterness." Ispahani who calls himself a lieutenant of Jinnah says, that the scheme for sovereign and independent Bengal was not blessed by Jinnah. He further says, that it is not a fact that Suhrawardy had Quid-e-Azam's knowledgeand permission. He continues, "To my knowledhe, this contention is not supported by anything on record anywhere. Again, during the life time of most of the All- India Muslim League Working Committee members, especially during the lifetime of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and Khawaja Nazimuddin, Mr. Suhrawardy, when criticized by the former, did not for once defend himself by declaring in public that his negotiations with Sarat Chandra Bose and his friends had the blessings of the Quaid-e-Azam." It is however told by a relative of Suhrawardy that he approached Jinnah but the latter was alleged to have said that he had just one day before agreed to the partition of Bengal and Mountbatten had already left for England with the partition proposal for Bengal.

SUHRAWARDY STAYS ON IN CALCUTTA

On 20th August, 1947, it is told Ikramulla telephoned his Begum (a relative of Suhrawardy) to convey themessage that Suhrawardy should be ready to come to Karachi from Calcutta. He was offered the ministry of refugees but Suhrawardy refused. Then he was offered the leadership of UN delegation. He spurned it too. Then at last he was offered to go to theMiddle East countries as a personal envoy of Jinnah. That too Suhrawardy declined.

He was a powerful chief minister of Bengal and held himself inferior to none including Liaquat Ali Khan. He wrote to Jinnah, "Under your able guidance there will be no dearth of leaders to look after the safety of Pakistan. Almost all Muslim League leaders have left for Pakistan. Almost all Muslim League leaders have left for Pakistan. There is none to look after the Muslims left over in India,. Please allow me to serve them."

His close friend s say those were not the words of his heart. He refused to accept any position in Pakistan owing tohis wounded pride arising out of antipathy of Jinnah and Liaquat towards him. Liaquat Ali could not tolerate Suhrawardy. His dislike for Suhrawardy was consistent and enduring. Liaquat'santipathy manifested in the election of new leadership for the new province of Bengal. Jinnah did not help. Liaquat Ali Khan's bias prevailed. In Punjab the question of new election was not considered. Unlike Bengal, the chief minister of old Punjab emeraged as the chief minister of West Punjab. All these unfairness galled Suhrawardy.

The fact that Fazlur Rahman and Dr. Malik entered the central cabinet on refusal of Suhrawardy exposed to him the trend and temper of Pakistan Government. In fact on the recommendation of Liaquat Ali Khan, Fazlur Rahman was offered the ministry of interior and Malik only the ministry of refugees.

There is a story by M. A. H. Ispahanid which he records in his book, 'Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah as I Knew Him" ; the Awami League leaders however question the veracity of the story. Ispahani says,"When I met Suhrawardy at a dinner given by Mr. Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah in Karachi early in August, 1947, he took me to the verandah after dinner and said in a mournful tone that after all the years of service to the Muslims, he was now out of everything and had to look for some sort of employment to keep himself actijve."

Ispahani approached Jinnah who is reported to have said, "Well, I think I can do comething. I am willing to send him out as my personal Representative to the Muslim and Middle Eastern countries to explain Pakistan so that they really understand us better. He will be given the rand of ambassador, of course." When Ispahani pleaded thal he should be made a minister, Jinnah replied, "It is not possible. Nazimuddin today enjoys the confidence of Bengal and if I include Suhrawardy in my Cabinet, itwould be tantamount to expressing no-

confidence in Nazimuddin and this, you will agree, would not be the correct thing." When Ispahani conveyed thewords of Jinnah, Suhrawardy refused the offer and added, "Ihave decided not to forsake my brother Muslims in Calcutta and to share their fate, whatever it may be." When Ispahani insisted Suhrawardy's reply was categorical, "No, I have made up my mind." When reaction of Suhrawardy was conveyed to Jinnah he shook his head and said, "That is finished. I am not prepared to accept terms and conditions from Suhrawardy."

Suhrawardy might have decided to stay in Calcutta due to frustration over his loss of chief ministership of East Bengal. But once he decided to stay in Calcutta his desire to serve the Muslims was decisive and intense. It welled up from within. To serve the Muslims of Bengal and to bring about peace and amity between Hindus and Muslims became his only passion in life in those days-a life that was battered by events and promised no future. Not only did he risk his life for the saving of lives of the Muslims; he made a minority charter of eight points to save the minority in both the nations and ran to and fro Karachi and Delhi for the approval of the Governments. To bring about confidence and pride in the new nationality he called an all India Muslim Conventioin in his own house at 4 Theater Road in Calcutta. The conference was attended among others by Hasrat Mohani.

He found in Gandhi a tried leader and colourful companion to work with in order to bring about peace and amity between the Hindus and Muslims. Gandhi in turn started liking Suhrawardy and the two leaders traveled widely to preach the message of peace and goodwill and to bring adoutconfidence in the hearts of helpless and cowering Muslims. Suhrawardy's association with Gandhi was queer spectacle and this partnership continued for some time.

Gandhi decided to fast unto death if the Hindus did not behave properly. The fast had a salutary affect upon Hindus; and the anti-muslim frenzy subsided a great deal. Gandhi thereupon broke his fast in Beliaghatta with a glass of orange juice offered by Suhrawardy. Through all this period Suhrawardy lived under the constant shadow of death from the extremist Hindu elements. Suhrawardy persuaded the chief minister of West Bengal, Dr.P.C. Ghosh and the Governor, Kailash Chandra Katju to visit Dhaka in

pursuance of his peace mission. They came and addressed a large meeting in Dhaka.

Once Suhrawardy decided to visit Dhaka by himself to address meetings to bring peace and fraternity between the Hindus and Muslims. He had been twice before in Dhaka and was a guest of Nazimuddin. This time he was coming with a purpose, and found to his dismay something different. He sat at the Dhaka airport for a car but found none. He waited for another halfand hour. Still there was no car. From the airport he telephoned Khawaja Nasirullah but he too begged apology as there were too many guests in his house. He then went to a house of a friend but the friend did not ask him to stay in his house. Perplexed, he stood on the road and wondered what to do since in those days there were no hotels in Dhaka. At last he moved into the house of Captain Shahjahan whom Suhrawardy did not know very well.

The discourtesy of Nazimuddin hurt Suhrawardy. Suhrawardy was to address the peace meeting called at Manikganj and he went to the steamer station at Badamtali ghat. One hour had passed yet the steamer did notstart. On enquiry it was learnt that without the permission of the Superintendent of Police, the steamer would not leave. When the Superintendent of Police was contacted it was told that whether he should be allowed to address the peace meeting at Manikganj was under discussion in the Nazimuddin cabinet. In the meantime, the steamer lay moored. At 10 P.M. three officers-Inspector General Zakir Hussain, Dequty Inspector General Obaidullah and District Magistrate Rahmatulla handed in a letter to Suhrawardy. The purport of the letter was that Suhrawardy was a citizen of India and as such he would not be allowed to address any meeting in Pakistan. On perusal of the letter Suhrawardy smiled a little more in disgust than in surprise. He admonished them, "How will you run the administration? I don't understand under what law you have issued this order. Neither India nor Pakistan has settledthe question of citizenship law yet. I am a member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. I know there were many Muslim League leaders of India who have come to Pakistan and have been addressing meetings. Even the father of the nation Jinnah has no home in Pakistan. You could hve easily restrained me from participating in the meetingby promulgating 144." Zakir Hussain

said firmly and quietly, "We are Government officers and as such we are only to carry out the orders of th government." At 11 P.M. he returned to the house of Captain Shahjahan. Next day Siddique Dewan, Deputy Superintendent of police informed Suhrawardy that arrangements had been made for his return to Calcutta and at 2 P.M. the steamer would leave Narayanganj.

Fazlul Huq, erstwhile political mate and rival was sitting disconsolate in his house. He too was stung by the pettiness of Nazimuddin Government. Fazlul huq in his characteristic manner in order to head off the difficulty of non-residence got his house at K.M. Das lane transferred to the name of Suhrawardy and invited him to come to Dhaka. He also sent the document to Suhrawardy. Suhrawardy however acknowledged this gesture with gratitude and returned the document by re-transferring the house, saying, "I belong to the family of Fakir and gave no intention of owning a house." In fact Suhrawardy had never felt any intent for immortalizing himself by naming any road of institution after his name. Out of gratitude, when osman following his election as Mayor of Calcutta after defeating M.A.H. Ispahani suggested to Chief Minister Suhrawardy to name certain road of Calcutta after his name, Suhrawardy declined. In fact nothing in Calcutta of later in Pakistan bears his name.

Nazimuddin government had their own reason to put a ban on the entry of Suhrawardy into East Pakistan. They argued that peace mission of Suhrawardy into East Pakistan implied that there was an uneasy feeling or riot among Hindus and Muslims. The activity of peace mission would only bring dishonour and infamy to the people of East Pakistan. For Suhrawardy it was an irony that he found his entry into East Bengal banned by Nazimuddin cabinet and his seat in the Constituent Assembly vacated because he was an Indian national.

History already seems remote and unreal when we are remember that it was Suhrawardy who arrived in Delhi convention in April 1946 after his triumphant success in the election and received warm congratulation from Jinnah for his "sincerity and hard work." The activities of Suhrawardy in Calcutta to bring about peace and cordiality between Hindus and Muslims were sublime indeed. It had another far reaching effect on Pakistan which was

overlooked by the leaders of Pakistan at that period. Due to the helplessness of Muslims of northern India the heavy onrush of the refugees became a tragic and overwhelming problem in Pakistan. For the infant province of West Punjab it was and unsettling and precarious existence. But that was not the case for East Bengal. Owing to the presence of Suhrawardy in Calcutta to comfort the Muslims of West Bengal, the flow of refugees was greatly curtailed and the tragic history was not repeated.

BECOMES A LEADER OF OPPOSITION

Suhrwardy was born and brought up in Calcutta. If any city was held any emotional attachment, it was Calcutta. Once he was uprooted from there finally in 1949, it was the same for him whether he settled in Dhaka or Karachi..

Karachi was the place where his loving daughter Mrs. Solaiman settled. Besides Karachi was the power base of the Central Government. He could no longer believe in the provincial politics. A man of such past and brilliance central politics and drive for the prime ministership was the only politics for him. But unfortunately, he did not have political roots there and West Pakistan was an unknown territory to him.

His political base was in East Pakistan, He knew the nook and corner of the territory. In 1946 he singlehandedly fought the election on whose result the foundation of East Pakistan was built. So bereft of deep geographic roots, he was a genuine Pakistani. Settled in West Pakistan and imbbing political nourishment from East Pakistan, Suhrawardy was an ideal Pakistani who could climb high above provincialism. Some of his disciples told rather jokingly, "PIA and Suhrawardy are the only two links between the two wings of Pakistan."

When he came to East Bengal he found disillusionment and disaffection simmering against the Muslim League. Twin issues of autonomy and state language began to exasperate the feelings between the people of East Bengal and West Pakistan. The Pakistan Muslim League which brought about the state of Pakistan was now virtually turned into purblind political organization.

When he finally came to Pakistan in 1949 he had nothing with

him to carry except his bruised ego and perseverance to start his career afresh. He took over the leadership of Awami League which had just been formed by Moulana Bhashani, Ataur Rahman and others in the teeth of opposition from the government. The ruling government frowned upon the formation of any opposition political party. The leaders in power forgot that in a parliamentary democracy, opposition has a necessary and distinctive role to play and is a sign of political vigour and vitality.

The Awami League was conceived on a national basis and began to spread in all the provinges of Pakistan. Though its appeal mainly lay in East Pakistan, under the leadership of Suhrawardy the Awami League became a force to reckon with. The Muslim League Councillors from Calcutta days who supported Suhrawardy became the hard core of the Awami League. Narayanganj and Moghultoli in Dhaka bercame the base camp of the Awami League organization.

The national aspect of Awami League was reinforced by its sympathy for the principles of jont electorate. The scrapping of the separate electorte as had been contemplated by the Basic Principles Committee was a bold and desirable step. Was the joint electorate planned to please the Hindus? Surely it was not. Hindus elected on separate electorate would be a separate and isolated entity. Thus the parity of East Pakistan in the National Assembly would get further jolt turning East Pakistan into a land of minority. Besides, the attitude of Awami League showed that it was trying to win the fetters of communalism---a step that was strangely enough welcomed by the minority population in East Pakistan.

Suhrawardy was fortunate to have Skeikh Mujibur Rahman, a young fearless political worker and a doughty fighter who tirelessly and with devotion organized the Awami League and carried its message to the people in the remote corners of the country.

FAZLUL HUQ AND NAZIMUDDIN: HIS POLITICAL RIVALS

Suhrawardy and Fazlul Huq were two greatest sons of Bengal but strangely enough throughout their lives they often fussed and fought with eaeh other. Both were geniuses and undoubtedly great

patriots but they were given to envy and rivalry. Their political ties during the 1954 election to defeat the Muslim League, their common enemy were contrived in expediency. Soon after the success in the election there was nothing to hold them together. Their old rivalry gap was wide open. Soon there was cleavage in the United Front not on the question of principles but over disagreement in the selection of ministers. Suhrawardy parted ways along with his supporters in Awami League and found a separate Parliamentary Group both in the provincial Assembly and National Parliament.

Their envy and rivalry was laid bare and boiled over after Chowdhury Mohammad Ali was elected the parliamentary leader of the Muslim League group numbering twentyfive. The next strongest group was Krishak Sramik cum Nizam-e-Islam party with sixteen members. To keep Suhrawardy out of office, Fazlul Huq prodded by Bogra Mohammad Ali and others of Krishak Sramik party offered the prime ministership to Chowdhury Mohammad Ali. The latter hesitated as the prime ministership as earlier promised to Suhrawardy by Ghulam Mohammad. Fazlul Huq however approached the new Governor General Iskander Mirza to ask Chowdhury Mohammad Ali to form the government. It is told that Bogra Mohammad Ali smarting under jealousy was goading Fazlul Huq to see that Suhrawardy was kept out. Happily for Bogra, Fazlul Huq was already determined to see Suhrawardy left out of the prime ministership.

Suhrawardy nursed a secret grievence against Nazimuddin who it is told failed Suhrawardy on many occasions. Take for instance his sacrifie for Nazimuddin: when Nazimuddin got utterly defeated in the famous election of Patuakhali in 1937 and was about to be cast into political wilderness it was Suhrawardy who vacated his seat in south Calcuttaa and made his way for the success of Nazimuddin. But Nazimuddin insipid as he was, never warmed up to Suhrawardy on any occasion.

It was the capacity of manoeuvre and subterfuge that was manifested in Nazimuddin on some occasions. In order to avoid dissension in the party at the instance of Jinnah, it was Suhrawardy who stepped out from the contest of leadership while Muslim League was going to form the first ministry, though Suhrawardy had overwhelming support among the Muslim League members.

When provincial parliamentary board was going to be elected just before the election of 1946, Nazimuddin as a leader of the house had the power of nominating five members out of eleven. Suhrawardy approached Nazimuddin for his nomination but Nazimuddin preferred Fazlur Rahman to Suhrawardy. It was a rude shock to Suhrawardy. Further, when Suhrawardy emerged as the secretary of the parliamentary board through election from the Muslim League council, it was Nazimuddin who put 35 of his personal friends in the nominated list at the courtesy of Suhrawardy and got them elected in the provincial election of 1946. The single block vote of 35 was later utilized to weed out Suhrawardy from the chief ministership of East Pakistan.

What Nazimuddin lacked in talent and brilliance before Suhrawardy he made it up by slow wisdom and farsighted move. Suhrawardy despite all his dazzle and brilliance was a sincere man at heart and was doubtlessly a self- respecting and a large- hearted man.

21 POINT MANIFESTO AND SUHRAWARDY

When Awami League decided to contest the election of 1954 Moulana Bhashani thought it was wise to have a political manifesto for the party. Abul Mansur Ahmed was made the eonvenor to draft the election manifesto. Abul Mansur drafted a 42 point manifesto. It was blessed by the Moulana as the future plank of the Awami League. When th United front was formed Bhashani wanted a manifesto from the United front Leaders as well. A steering committee was formed for the purpose with Suhrawardy as chairman and three members from each party-Awami League and Krishak Sramik party. From the Awami League, Abul Mansur, Ataur Rahman and Mujibur Rahman were taken in the steering committee. Kafiluddin, Taffazal Hussain and Mohan Mia were from the KSP. The original 42 points drafted by Abul Mansur Ahmed were put up before the steering committee of the United Front.

When it was shown to Suhrawardy he remarked that 42 points were too many. Suhrawardy asked Abul Mansur to cut them down to lesser umbers. It was brought down to 28. Then on further

slashing it was down to 18. The Awami Leagures wanted autonomy on the basis of the Lahore resolution.-That was the 19th point. Kafiluddin Chowdhury wanted to safeguard the interest of the jute growers. He insisted on adding some safeguards for them and thus introduced the 20th point of nationalization of jute trade. Finally Kamruddin, a leader of the Trade Union movement wanted to add something for the industrial labourers. Thus was created the 21st point in the interest of the labour. Moulana Bhashani demanded in presence of Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy, "Once you decide a manifesto you must not go back. I am going out to the countryside telling te people about the manifeso."

After 21 point manifesto was finally drafted it was put to Suhrawardy for his approval. Suhrawardy said, "After the election Fazlul Huq will be the chief minister. He can only decide whether he can execute the 21 point manifesto."

Suhrawardy however bristled at the idea of turning the Burdawan house into Bengali Academy. He did not mind to have an Academy but retorted, "not this residential building." Besides, it looked petty and undignified to make the chief minister's residence a Bengali Academy. It would smack of revenge. This house is called Burdawan House because in 1905 the Raja of Burdawan lived in this house while he came to Dhaka as an executive member of the Viceroy's Council.

He also did not like 21st. February to be declared as national holiday. Suhrawardy said, "There might be so many demonstrations and deaths on so many issues. You cannot have so many holidays. That will retard the development of the country." Nor did he like the nationalization of jute trade which he thought to be impractical and shortsighted at this stage.

To Suhrawardy the proposed salary of Rs.1000/- in the manifesto for the ministers was absurd and impractical. He believed that the lower pay would only demoralize the coalition Government with the other parties. The upshot would be that whereas the ministers of other parties in the coalition would draw Rs. 3000/- as their salary, the ministers of the United Front would draw Rs. 1000/-. He thought that was ridiculous. He declined to accept the manifesto as binding on the central Government ministers from the United Frtont.

It was easy to understand Suhrawardy's objection to many of the

points of the manifesto. He was not confined to provincial politics. His interest spread to the whole of Pakistan. He did not want to clash directly with the West Pakistani interests since it would jeopardize his future career in central politics. It was an irony that Awami League which was an East Pakistani oriented party had a leader with ambition for central politics and power. It is told Abul Mansur wanted the number of the points to mark the 21st February which is the historic day to commemorate the death of the students in the movement for Bengali as a state language.

Qamrul Ahsan, a former MNA of Sylhet met Suhrawardy when the latter was hospitalized in January, 1963. Ahsan says, "Suhrawardy was in sick bed in the Jinnah central hospital and there were strict instructions not to draw him into tiring conversation. So we were mostly listeners; he alone talked. But now and then, I asked one or two questions. At one time, I enquired: "Isn't it a fact that you never publicly spoke in favour of the United Front's 21 point programme?" With a twinkle in his eye, he replied, 'I am glad that you could detect it." That gave out Suhrawardy, the bold and fearless practical genius."

Armed with the 21 point manifesto of the United Front led by Fazlul Huq Suhrawardy and Bhashani plunged into the contest against the Muslim League. The result was incredible and created a jolt to the vested interests in Karachi. They declared that the success was symptom of the negative voting. The votes cast in favour of the United Front were the direct outcome of bitterness and resentment against the Muslim League, not in support of the United Front. When Suhrawardy, one of the three heroes of the United Front, landed at Karachi Airport he was greeted with such enthusiastic reception that it reminded the newspaper the Dawn to comment that the reception of Suhrawardy was no less heart warming than that of Qaid-e-Azam on his first arrival in Karachi after the creation of Pakistan.

Unfortunately the façade of unity was not to last long. It cracked on the rock of self interest, suspicion and whims of individual leaders.

A MINISTER UNDER BOGRA MOHAMMAD ALI

When Ataur Rahman went to Zurich he found Suhrawardy convalescing in a hospital. Strangely enough the Constituent Assembly was dissolved by Ghulam Mohammad on the day Ataur Rahman saw Suhrawardy in Zurich. Ataur Rahman explained to him about the ominous development in Pakistan, particularly the entry of the army into power politics. Suhrawardy at first could not believe it but when he found the name of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army in the new cabinet Suhrawardy felt disturbed. He decided that the next curse of action would be taken by him after reaching Pakistan.

When he reached Karachi he was pale and haggard. He was received at Karachi Airport with great ovation. Before his arrival in Karachi he had already called working committee meeting of the central Awami League. The air was thick with rumour that Suhrawardy was soon forming the government replacing Bogra Mohammad Ali. A meeting of the Awami League working committee was held in his house at Kutchery Road. He sought the advice of the members of the working committee whether he would accept the office of the minister in case he could not be made prime minister. The members preferred an objection of the grounds: Firstly, he should not join as a minister under Bogra Mohammad Ali as the policies of the United Front manifesto could not be given effect to, secondly the writ petition of Tamizuddin against the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly was pending in the court of law. Soon however Suhrawardy went to the Governor General's house and had a meeting with Ghulam Mohammad extending for more than four hours.

Next day another meeting of the Awami League was held. There Suhrawardy explained that Ghulam Mohammad advised him to enter the cabinet as a law minister for the time being. Within three months he would be made prime minister. Ghulam Mohammad furtherer explained to Suhrawardy that the frequent changes of prime minister would reflect on the reputation of Pakistan government. Suhrawardy was expected to frame a Constitution which was urgently needed for the country. Suhrawardy told his Awami Leaguers "Prime Ministership is not important; what is

important is the framing of the Constitution."

When the members did not agree to Suhrawardy's proposal he suggested that he would hold a confidential meeting with eight select members of the Awami League, four from each wing Next day he held a meeting with eight members at Hotel Metropole. Suhrawardy again stressed that Ghulam Mohammad had sworn that he would be made prime minister within three months. Besides, two ministers from Awami League would be taken in the central cabinet. A draft of the new constitution would be completed within six months and it would be validated as an interim constitution by an ordinance in order that the general elections could be held within one year of the framing of the Constitution. Lastly, the new parliament would be free to amend the Constitution according to their wishes. While this meeting was going on Dr. Khan Saheb, General Ayub and Major General Iskandar Mirza met Suhrawardy in his hotel. It was obvious that be cabinet was keen to take Suhrawardy as a minister.

The decision of Suhrawardy to join as a minister under Bogra pained his supporters. It was unthinkable to them that Suhrawardy a veteran leader and for a long time a chief minister of undivided Bengal would decide to join as a minister under Bogra, who had been his junior minister under him in 1946. Suhrawardy had earlier claimed that the only offece in the Government that would satisfy his party and himself was that of the prime minister.

From the day of his arrival in Pakistan Suhrawardy's mission was never in doubt. He was driven to the fulfillment of his long cherished ambition of becoming a prime minister. Why then did he prefer to join asa minister now? Suhrawardy had however his own reasons:-Firstly, framing of the Constitution was urgent and he could do it without delay as a law minister. Secondly, if the constitutional crisis remained Ghulam Mohammad might again call the army and hand over the administration to them. Thirdly, Suhrawardy wanted to clear the misunderstanding with the army officers created during the Rawalpindi Conspiracy case. Through the ministry he would get chances to contact the army chief and develop correct relationship Fourthly, he would be able to arrange the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from detention. Further, he would also try to lift the ban on

the entry of Maulana Bhashani into East Pakistan. Lastly, if he remained in the central cabinet it would be easier for him to manage the induction of Awami League ministry in East Pakistan.

Even with all these arguments the Awami League members were left unconvinced. The Awami Leaguers as usual fretted and fumed but Suhrawardy ultimately decided to join. The Awami Leaguers threatened that he would be given a black flag demonstration when he went to Dhaka. Suhrawardy however went to Lahore after joining as a minister in the cabinet of Bogra. In a press interwiew a reporter asked him, "Did Awami League approve of your joining the cabinet?" "What is Awami League? I am the Awami League" replied Suhrawardy. When another reporter asked him, "Can you give effect to the policies of Awami League manifesto? Suhrawardy retorted, "What is the manifesto? I am the manifesto."

The decision of Suhrawardy to enter as a subordinate minister under Bogra disconcerted his followers in East Pakistan. They believed Ghulam Mohammad was not sincere in his promise and only wanted to utilize the services of Suhrawardy to frame the mucdh needed Constitution. Once the work was over, he would be thrown out on some pretext unceremoniously.

Abul Mansur says he was deeply hurt when he heard though the radio that Suhrawardy had joined the Bogra Mohammad. Ali cabinet as a minister. He sent telegram to Suhrawardy "Congratulations. I hope you have acted wisely." Later when Suhrawardy happened to meet Abul Mansur Suhrawardy told him "I was sorry to receive your telegram." Abul Mansur replied "I was more sorry than you were."

His detractors thought that Suhrawardy was not a political novice or a simpleton to be duped by the enticing whispers of Ghulam Mohammad. He allowed himself to be bluffed and coaxed by Ghulam Mohammad. It was not a contest of wits but it was expediency pitted against expediency. Ghulam Mohammad placed in a position of vantage could play on the ambition of Suhrawardy.

Some critics suggested that Suhrawardy tired of remaining in opposition for long longed for poweer and comfort after a bout of prolonged illness. During this period Ghulam Mohammad issued an

ordinance to form a Constitution Convention in place of Constitutent Assembly. This act of Governor General was clearly a negation of democracy. The Convention is the product of the autocratic brain of Ghulam Mohammad and the acceptance would be to surrender to his dictatorial posture. Suhrawardy at first did not agree to this proposat. Ghulam Mohammad was however successful in persuading Suhrawardy. When this proposal was put up to the Awami League they turned it down. They particularly bristled at the parity proposal between East and West Pakistan in the Convention. Suhrawardy argued, "On the question of representation misunderstanding has been going on for a long time between the two wings. All this will disappear on the acceptance of parity. Good will and harmony shall return. The sacrifice is worth it."

Moulana Bhashani issued a statement from Calcutta criticizing the Constitution Convention. The issue whether Awami League would join the Convention remained unsettled. It was however decided that the issue would be settled on return of Moulana Bhashani to Dhaka. Later a meeting of Awami League was held at Dhaka with Moulana Bhashani as the chairman. Some of the Awami League leaders wanted time to decide the issue of joining the Convention. Suhrawrdy did not agree. Moulna Bhashani was ultimately persuaded by Suhrawardy to agree to submission of the nomination papers. It might be conceded here that the Krishak Sramik Party turned down this Convention proposal despite the best efforts of Iskandar Mirza to persuade them.

The plan of Ghulam Mohammad was however set at naught by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, The Court decided that the Governor General had no power to constitute a Convention. He must proced with the setting up of Constituent Assembly.

The Awami League felt embarrassed at the new turn of events. Abul Mansur says sadly, "As the Awami League has benefltted from his extraordinary brilliance and leadership quality so has the Awami League and ultimately the country suffered for one or two of his major weaknesses. As an example, it can be said that Suhrawardy joined the Bogra cabinet as a minister against the unanimous verdict of the central Awami league working committee."

SUHRAWARDY BECOMES PRIME MINISTER

It was refreshing for President Iskander Mirza to see that even after the Constitution of 1956 it was not difficult for him to make and unmake a Prime Minister, The reign of Chowdhury Mohammad Ali Survived only for thirteen months. It was Mirza again who schemed the down fall of Chowdhury Mohammad Ali. Dr. Khan Saheb. The chief minister of West Pakistan who found his government foundering on the disloyalty of the Muslim Leaguers went ahead to form a party of his own –the Republican party –with the blessings of the Mirza

The moment the Muslim Leaguers learnt that President Mirza had blessed the new party all but ten Muslim Leaguers turned Republicans obviously for the sake of political plums. Imagine the new twist and unpredictability of Pakistan politics. Chowdhury Mohammad Ali who found all his Muslim Leaguers slipping past him resigned in frustration. Mirza then called upon Suhrawardy to head the new government. The vehement, resourceful and nimble leaping Suhrawardy seemed to offer a brighter hope for a stable government at the centre President Mirza declared earlier that, "Suhrawardy would become prime minister over my dead body." Why then did he prefer Suhrawardy now? Mirza of course had private reasons of his own:

1. Suhrawardy and his Awami League opposed the framing of 1956 constitution assuch they would not be keen to work the constitution.
2. Suhrawardy might be persuaded to delay the general election.
3. Mirza wanted the governments of different leaders to fall quick succession so as to justify the contention that democracy in Pakistan had failed.

Mirza calculated that Awami League was emerging as the largest party after the election in East Pakistan and some sort of rapproachment might be useful for his future ambition to remain as president.

After his decision Mirza came to East Pakistan to feel the political pulse and flew to Karachi along with Suhrawardy, the prime

minister designate. Mirza knew and understood Suhrawardy very well. Both were extrovert, ambitious, vain and flamboyant. Both were shrewd, competent political operators and delighted in power.

In the political firmament if Mirza found any serious political rival, it was Suhrawardy. By giving the reins of power, Mirza was alert and circumspect. He was watchful and jealous of increasing power and prestige of Suhrawardy. It was an uneasy truce between the two; they liked and desliked each other alternately.

Suhrawardy was waiting for this auspicious day for the last ten years-too long a period for the ambitious and brilliant Suhrawardy. To him it was virtually an exile from the seat of power. During this decade he was driven to wilderness and had seen his life with Gandhi and in Pakistan he marshaled the opposition from nothing and found his political meetings broken up by the Muslim League hirelings and its vandals. At last his lack-lusture period was gone and he was now driving towards the position he thought due to him long before. He had seen an array of fatuous and feckless leaders occupying the highest office and then fading away in dishonor and futility without leaving any imprint of their personality in the Government.

Once Suhrawardy was in office he set about his task with zeal and enthusiasm. Within one month of his taking office he declared on 10th October, 1956 in the National Assembly, "The two nations theory was advanced by the Muslims as a justification for the partition of India and the creation of a state made up of geographically contiguous units where the Muslims were numerically in a majority Once that state was created, the two nation theory lost its force even for the Muslims,"

When Suhrawardy came to power, he found to his dismay that the bureaucracy had a complete grip over the national affairs. Chowdhury Mohammad Ali, a bureaucrat turned politician seemed to have paved the way for the ascendancy of the bureaucracy. With Suhrawardy ushered in the power, pride and confidence of the public representatives. Before the personality of Suhrawardy the bureaucracy quaked in fear and

soon receded to their anonymity and confined themselves to their desks in the impersonal power apparatus of the secretariat.

Suhrawardy glided to the political surface on the upsurge of a mass political party born and bred in Pakistan, and untainted by political bigotism. To other leaders religion was the guidline in politics. To Suhrawardy Awami League rooted in the mass irrespective of religion was his saddle. To him the electorate was one and indivisible. Religion has no place in it. That is a new and refreshing theme for Pakistan – once a product of religious separatism from the State.

He followed up his theme of one nation theory by passing a bill in the parliament for joint electorate. To the world Pakistan now presented the image of a secular state no more tarnished by religious bigotism.

Once Suhrawardy was esconsed himself as the Prime Minister he began to travel beyond the bounds of the 21 point programme of the United Front. Although the repeal of the Safety act was the number 3 point of the 21 point manifess to, Suhrawardy declared on February, 18, 1957 "So long as I am the prime minister of the country, I would not allow a comma or semi coln to be deleted for the safety and security of the country." The East Pakistani Awami League leaders were perplexed and saddened by the new image of Suhrawardy in power. They privately grumbled before Suhrawardy but they could neither restrain him nor spurn him as they needed a leader- a front man of national fame and reputation.

Suhrawardy however knew that economic disparity was rankling in the minds of his followers. The first step was taken on November 8, 1956, in a high powered meeting when it was decided that existing categories of importers were to be reviewed and to introduce new comers from East Pakistan as well as unrepresented areas of West Pakistan in import trade." The distribution of 10 million dollar aid favouring East Pakistani industrialization incensed the long- privileged interests of West Pakistan.

The business community entrenched for yearswas hurt. Their suspijcion seemed to be confirmed. They thought that the "decisions appear to be leaning towards provincialism and party

politics."

A permanent office of the Controller of Import and Export was set up in East Pakistan and a new financial year was introduced.

Mirza who was watching grimly and uncomfortably at the rise of Suhrawardy in the power politics took his chance He condemned the government saying, "Their party politics ..... had a serious impact on the economic life of the nations. Parity in the political sphere may be workable compromise but its application to economic planning.....may lead to blind alleys."

His party men were disappointed in Suhrawardy because he did not go for autonomy and West Pakistan disliked him because they thought he was and East Pakistani first and a Prime Minister second.

SUHRAWARDY AND HIS FOREIGN POLICY

In his first broadcast as the Prime Minister he enunciated the foreign policy to be independent and professed friendship to all countries of the globe. He was the man who had given a new look to the foreign policy of Pakistan by fraternizing with our greatest neighbor, China. The vast sprawling country which lies astride Pakistan on the northern frontier had a compelling interest in him. He decided to visit China which appeared to some as an ominous, baffling and an inscrutable nation of 700 million people. Thoughts on India, Britain and America dominated our minds in shaping the foreign policy of Pakistan. China was too close yet it was too far as if it was shadowy and something that did not belong to this world. For Pakistan it only existed on the map.

Within three months of his take over, he visited that great country and had thus sown the seed of the neutral foreign policy. Suhrawardy was the first Prime Minister to undertake that bold and imaginative step of befriending that country. This caused USA and Britain to flutter in disapproval. But Suhrawardy who had already made up his mind was not going to be deterred by the uneasiness of the western friends.

Suhrawardy's visit was followed by the visit of China's

Prime Minister, Chou En Lai to Dhaka. I still remember Suhrawardy entering the Dhaka city in an open jeep with the Prime Minister Chou En Lai. Sometime when the crowd on the wayside near the High Court remained silent and passive Suhrawardy with a vigorous gesture of his hand signaled to them to cheer and raise slogans. Chou En Lai was allowed to address a large public meeting inside the Stadium in Dhaka. Here in this public meeting, an Awami League leader, Ataur Rahman Khan called upon China to take over the leadership of Asia. The Friendship with China served another purpose that was to introduce a new element in the power struggle for Asian leadership to which India had unobtrusively laid their claim.

Pakistan had uneasy relationship with Nasser of Egypt. During Chowdhury Mohammad Ali's regime the Foreign Minister, Hamidul Huq Chowdhury went to Cairo. Chowdhury along with T. Ali who was then our Ambassador in Egypt met Nasser and conveyed the cabinet approval of the support for Nasser's stand in war with Britain and France and Israel.

The Foreign Minister of Egypt Dr. Fawzi and Hamidul Huq issued a joint communiqué for their agreed policy on the war. When Hamidul Huq went to London he was called to a meeting with Dulles, the USA Secretary of State. Dulles wanted the aid receiving countries to support Britain and France against Nasser. The Foreign minister sought the advice of the Prime Minister, Chowdhury Mohammad Ali. The Prime Minister remained silent. Then he asked President Mirza. The President advised the foreign minister Hamidul Huq not to annoy the government of USA as Pakistan is bound to USA by bilateral pact. Hamidul Huq Chowdhury obliged accordingly by his speech in the Commonwealth Conference. Nasser was got angry.

Meanwhile Suhrawardy took over as Prime Minister. Soon a truce was reached in the Israeli war. Suhrawardy proposed to send a contingent of the Pakistan army for truce observation. In fact the Pakistani UNO delegation handed over the letter to Dag Hammarskzold the secretary general of the UN. Suhrawardy later found to his dismay that Pakistan's name was deleted from

the list by Nasser's government though other names remained intaet. Suhrawardy felt humiliated.

Suhrawardy decided now to isolate Nasser. He wanted to Iraq and contacted the Prime Minister Nure-es-Said. What he said was very simple and convincing. He said that Nasser was a power loving dictator out to grab power in the Arab world. Nasser changed the name of Egypt to United Arab Republic in order to embrace all Arab countries. His interest was two fold- one was oil and another was to bring the entire Arab nations under his personal hegemony. He further hinted rather darkly that the royalty would disappear in the Arab countries before the onrush of Arab socialism.

Suhrawardy said the same thing more or less to Beirut and Saudi Arabia. In Beirut he had found a great personal friend in Rashid Karami, the Prime Minister of Lebanon who survived in power till recently. Suhrawardy visited these Arab countries under cover of certain other projects such as expanding trade or to establish jute mills etc. The propaganda of Suhrawardy began to spread to Nasser through his embassies. After his tour in Lebanon he wrote to Nasser about his intention to visit his great country. He wrote that he had particular interest to visit Arab lands as his forefathers carried Arab blood. Nasser however was not impressed. He declined to invite Suhrawardy and replied curtly that he would remain busy for sometime with problems at home. Suhrawardy was deeply hurt.

To Nasser's estimation Suhrawardy's prestige might have fallen but his prestige to other Arab world soared. His critics said that this carried him no where. After all Nasser is the Arab world. When Suhrawardy was traversing America as the guest of the US the President of Tunisia, Habib Burguiba invited Suhrawardy to visit their land. Suhrawardy could not however oblige Tunisian President and promised to visit him on his way back home from the US. That however never happened.

Nasser's antipathy against the Pakistanis has historical root. It is the Indian Muslims now turned Pakistanis who took leading role to maintain and perpetuate Khilafat, that was to bolster the Turkish Ottoman Empire against the Arab people struggling to secede into separate and independent nations. When

Suhrawardy's feud with Moulana Bhashani came to the surface he once took a chance to denigrate Arab strength at a speech before the students of the Dhaka University. His famous foreign policy speech of zero plus zero plus zero is equal to zero was aimed at the futility and folly of allaying with the raucous tongued but powerless Arab countries. The prophesy of Suhrawardy was vindicated just about a decade later when the fourteen Arab countries suffered defeat and humiliation at the hands of a tiny but capricious and resolute Israel.

Suhrawardy left a great mark in the Commonwealth Conference in London. A local English weekly Spectator commented that at last Pakistan had a Prime Minister who could match the talent and ability of India's Jawaharlal Nehru.

From London he proceeded to the US. The visit to the US marked an important phase in the foreign policy of Pakistan. He traveled widely in the US and took a chance to visit Hollywood in California. His speech before the Congress was memorable not only for his superb oratorical skill but for the contents as well. His pragmatic analysis of the world situation impressed the President Eisenhower and the people of America.

The story has it that the Pakistan Embassy in Washington prepared a draft for his speech and gave it to Suhrawardy four days before he was to address the Congress. Suhrawardy was asked to approve the draft so that it might be passed on to the press. Suhrawardy was so busy with different engagements that he had no time to read it. Just one day before the meeting while still he could not manage to read the draft he was asked to approve it. Suhrawardy released the draft as approved just after a quick glance.

When he appeared before the Congress he did not take out the draft from his pockit but went on with his extempore speech. The speech was quite impressive not only for his peroration or the language but for the masterly analysis of the world events. When the meeting was finished Suhrawardy self confidently asked an UN delegate from Pakistan, "How did you find the speech? Is it not better than the draft of the embassy?"

"Oh, yes, Sir, it is so. But it was of no use to the country." replied the delegate. "Why?" asked perplexed Suhrawardy.

"Sir, your extempore speech was not published in the press. The draft approved and released by you has been published," informed the delegate.

FALL OF SUHRAWARDY'S CABINET

The fall of Suhrawardy was engineered by Mirza himself. His duplicity and guile worked for the doom of Suhrawardy. The purpose for which Suhrawardy was inducted to the office went by default. Though he opposed the passing of the Constitution of 1956 Suhrawardy worked sincerely for its success. Suhrawardy wanted to hold the general election on schedule. But the President Mirza wanted there wise. President used his Chief Election Commissioner F.M. Khan to upset the plan of Suhrawardy and called the Chief Election Commissioner to a cabinet meeting and personally asked him to expedite the matter. The Election Commissioner told the cabinet, "I am appointed by the President and I shall work under the guidance of the President alone."

President Mirza wanted assurances from the Awami League ministers including Ataur Rahman, Abul Mansur Ahmed and Mujibur Rahman that he should be made President after the next election. They however promised to do so in order that the election took place according to the schedule. Mirza was not content. He wanted assurance from Suhrawardy as well. The latter at first declined. Later however he agreed to promise. Within a few days President Mirza told a representative of the New York Times, "Prime Minister and I shall never leave each other. There is no one so able as Shaheed Suhrawardy in the whole of Pakistan."

Soon Suhrawardy went to London. At the Airport on a query from a reporter Suhrawardy said, "I am thinking of two men for the office of the President after the next election." It is told Mirza after reading this news in a newspaper called Abul Mansur and pointed out to him, "See now, what your leader has done. He has talked about two persons at the London airport just to bluff me. Actually he has decided to make Gurmani President." Once President Mirza found that Suhrawardy was not going to delay the election, he lost interest in Suhrawardy. He then began to needle Suhrawardy and

planned his downfall.

When Suhrawardy was in London Abul Mansur telephoned Suhrawardy informing him that President Mirza wanted an immediate decision on two files –one about the extension of service of the Commander-in-chief and another on the dismissal of Gurmani from the Governorship from West Pakistan for his tinkering in politics. Suhrawardy informed that he would give the decision after reaching Pakistan as those files were of vital importance.

President Mirza developed disagreement with Suhrawardy on different issues. Mirza insisted on bringing into life a Republican Government in West Pakistan against the wishes of Gurmani and also of Suhrawardy. Nor was it all. A few days later President Mirza one day called Abul Mansur and told him, "Look Abul Mansur, there is no reason why I should have misunderstanding with Shaheed. You know the Principal Private Secretary is the root cause of all evil. He is a man of Gurmani. Please transfer him from Prime Minister's offece. Otherwise our misunderstanding will never end. He gives all sorts of advice to the Prime Minister."

Prime Minister declined to transfer his principal private secretary. Suhrawardy commented, "President should not interfere with my choice of private secretary. If I accept president's advice history will not forgive me." President also asked Suhrawardy to arrest Moulana Bhashani. But Suhrawardy had declined on the ground that there was nothing incriminating against Bhashani in the file.

The ministry of Suhrawardy finally broke down on the question of one unit in West Pakistan. When one unit was formed the Awami League opposed it not on the question of principle but the way it was pushed through. The Awami League opposed because it was born undemocratically. The discontent against one unit began to smoulder in the smaller provinces, particularly in Sind and North West Frontier province. Sensing it could be cause of the people, the Republicans who were groping for ideological foothold, accepted the plan to break the one unit. As the Republicans had to depend upon the National Awami Party, an avowed enemy of the one unit plan,

they could not support the one unit either. Suhrawardy however decided otherwise. He began to defend the one unit. Suhrawardy said, "I have final discussion about this matter with the President. We are making broadcast simultaneously defending the one unit plan." Suhrawardy however told his party members who earlier asked him to go slowly in this matter, "One unit is the question of my principle. Even if I am to give up the ministry for it I don't mind."

He was down with illness on the day he was to make the broadcast. In fact the broadcasting machineries and the officers of the Radio Pakistan were in Prime Minister's house. Meanwhile the Muslim League had also decided to go against of unit scheme. Suhrawardy found that all the three parties in West Pakistan, the Republican, the Muslim League and the National Awami decided to break up the one unit against the wishes of the people. So he decided to go out to the country appealing to the people direct for the cause of one unit. He planned three tour programmers; Punjab and Bahawalpur were first in the list of his tour programme. He spoke eloquently in favour of one unit and made fervent plea to the people to retain it.

The irony was that Suhrawardy addressed meeting against the policy of the Republicans- meetings were arranged by the Republicans themselves. He went on berating the Republicans at meeting after meeting as saboteurs and enemies of Pakistan. The Republicans complained, "Suhrawardy addressed the meetings called and arranged by us. Even the garlands for him were bought by us. But the Prime Minister called us traitors and our heads hang in shame and disgust."

Soon the Republicans protested to the President Mirza, "The Prime Minister called us traitors and we are unwilling to work with him." Besides it was also reported that the Prime Minister had been rude to Dr. Khan Saheb and Col. Abid Hussain. The story has it that once Dr. Khan Saheb wanted to see Suhrawardy. Though Suhrawardy was informed of the arrival of Dr. Khan Saheb, Suhrawardy lay in his bed and kept Dr. Khan Saheb waiting in the drawing room and commented, "Who is Dr. Khan Saheb? This is not

a Republican government, this is Awami League Government." And Suhrawardy did not come out of his bed room till Dr. Khan Saheb was tired of waiting. Dr. Khan Saheb informed Mirza that they were coming to Karachi for a final show down.

A few days later there was a reception for the Vice President of Yugoslavia who came to Pakistan on a State visit, Though the elite of the city crowded in the Prime Minister's reception, none of the Central Ministers from West Pakistan turned up. The boycott was an ominous signal. In the midst of State reception none seemed to notice the absence. But the jouirnalists pestered the East Pakistani ministers and began to ask embarrassing questions. Meanwhile Suhrawardy had a talk with the President; and when somebody asked Suhrawardy about his misunderstanding with the President, he said, "That is nothing. Everything is all right."

After the reception was over, he bade few of his ministers to the adjoining room and closed the door. He then showed a letter of Mirza to them. The contents of the letter said that President asked him to resign as, "the Republicans have no confidence in him." Suhrawardy after parley with his ministers wrote back to the President asking him to call the parliament. He also informed Mirza that he was not going to resign without facing the parliament. Suhrawardy was banking upon the Muslim League group led by Gurmani and Daulatana and hoped to escape with parliamentary majority. The President did not agree to call the parliament.

President asked Suhrawardy to write out a resignation letter. He assured Suhrawardy that he would not use the resignation letter. His resignation letter was only contrived as a threat to frighten the Republicans. To accept the resignation of Suhrawardy meant that Muslim Leage would be asked to form the alternative government. President assured that the Republicans would then approach the President to request Suhrawardy to continue as a Prime Minister.

Suhrawardy sincerely believed Mirza and assured his party men, "Resignation letter means nothing. It is just to control the Republicans." Unfortunately what his party men apprehended happened to be true. Few days later President informed Suhrawardy that he had accepted the resignation. Any way he was asked to continue as a Prime Minister till a new ministry was formed. It is

strange that Mirza a life long bureaucrat and a new intrant into politics appeared to be more shrewd and crafty than Suhrawardy.

SUHRAWARDY GOES TO JAIL

Martial Law in 1958 came as a shock to Suhrawardy. It clashed with his sense and sensibility. A born democrat himself whatever he learned in his life time-the world of his parliamentary democracy and liberty-all crashed around him. One of his disciples asked him: "Sir, now that the Martial Law has come, what doyou want to do about it?" Suhrawardy replied: "I know only the constitutional way to fight. I do not know any other way" That was Suhrawardy.

Suhrawady a restless soul could not remain apolitical and withdraw in to despair for long. He asked the Awami League to chalk out a blueprint for launching a nonviolent, constitutional movement. Meanwhile the country seemed to tolerate the straitjacket administration of the ruling military junta.

It is told whenever he got opportunity he tried to bring together various opposition elements. He attended the marriage ceremony of the daughter of Tamizuddin with the son of Nurul Amin. There under the cover of the social function, he had opportunity to talk to the possibility of having a united platform.

When Suhrawardy was the Prime Minister of Pakistan, John F. Kennedy who was then a senator, met Suhrawardy at Karachi. When Kennedy was the President, Suhrawardy was a leader of the opposition. Suhrawardy went to the US and happened to meet President Kennedy..

President Ayub visited the US and met President Kennedy. It is believed by some that Kennedy spoke about Pakistan and appeared to know something, which the Pakistan government did not like and thought all these must have been told by Suhrawardy. Suhrawardy was arrested in Karachi on 31st January, 1962. The President on his arrival at Dhaka in February, 1962 told a reporter that Suhrawardy with the help of foreign government was planning to destroy Pakistan.

When Suhrawardy came out of the jail, he came out with luxuriant beard and a lot of emotion. Seeing some students he told, "I hug them, I kiss them, I embrace them"

SUHRAWARDY AS A MAN AND A LEADER

Despite his vast popularity and his spell upon his workers, he was a lonely man. His background, his pride and brilliance was an invisible barrier between himself and his followers. He was just not complex; he was contradictory. His basic characteristics were simple, wayward virtues and in direct conflict with each other. He was constantly at war with himself. He did not know how to be happy, easily got bored and when opportunity offered, he left for a new country and new environment for being himself. He had no enemies. He had no family and no friends. He had millions of admirers and well wishers. They adored him but stood aloof from him.

He disliked the aged and the weary. That one day he would be too old and useless frightened him. But he was not afraid of death. Towards the end of his life, he felt occasional fits of depression. Martial law and Basic Democracy of President Ayub Khan was like a blind alley to him. It choked him and his thrust for power, the only thing left for him. Suhrawardy was all along a fatalist. His favourite astrologer in Calcutta defrauded him a lot of money. EBDO (Election Bodies Disqualification Order) of Ayub Khan disqualified him from politics which hurt his pride and developed in him some kind of morbid fatalism.

Suhrawardy was in reality a baffled hero. His immense talent was greatly undone by his simplicity, vanity and restlessness. He sought loyalty from his workers, his aides and the people; and he pushed his demand for loyalty to the point where it ceased to be loyalty and became obeisance. He was no doubt a prodigy, a state of torment and in the heart of it a religious man. Once Suhrawardy gave away a considerable sum of money to a needy person and when his aide asked him "Why do you give him so much money" Suhrawardy replied, "I have given him for deposit." When the aide did not understand, Suhrawardy said, "I have given him the money to deposit for the heaven."

Suhrawardy was no doubt a democrat but then there was a

veneer of autocracy around his personality. To put it other way round Suhrawardy was essentially an autocrat in a democratic mould. He rode too high above the Awami League party. Often on vital issues they clashed discordantly. In any matter never did Suhrawardy bow before the Awami League working committee. When they differed, he applied his persuasive logic and if it failed, he used friendly coercion and threats. But at last he had always approval of the party. Whether it was the parity issue of convention or his joining as a subordinate minister under Bogra or his denounciation of the anti-one unit stand of the Republican Party the working committee unanimously fretted and fumed but always ultimately submitted to the logic of Suhrawardy.

If it is believed that Suhrawardy persuaded them to change their opinion of these issues and there was nothing undemocratic in it; still sneaking suspicion lingers why it was that the party members-some of whome were quite veterans always misjudge all the issues and Suhrawardy was always right. But history tells otherwise. One Senior Awami league member told him, "Sir, you are an autocrat trying to introduce democracy."

Despite his autocratic ways with his partymen, he had immense faith in the people and believed in the free growth democracy. When Suhrawardy returned from Zurich he was asked to comment on controlled democracy at a press conference. Suhrawardy remarked, "Democracy controls itself. Any interference or control from outside shall kill the democracy."

Suhrawardy's personality was such and flashes of his timper were so sudden that bureaucracy quaked at his presence. When he was chief minister of Bengal in 1946, the chief secretary Walker once wanted to see him and went to the chief minister's room. Finding none in the room he sat on a chair and waited for the chief minister Suhrawardy.

When Suhrawardy came he saw Walker sitting on a chair. He was stung. To put him away from the chair Suhrawardy asked him to bring a file. When the chief secretary returned with the file, Suhrawardy kept him standing in front of the table and rested his leg pointing towards him. It was all embarrassment for the chief secretary. So to get away from the room, he suggested to the chief

minister, "Sir, could I make a draft for your speech in the assembly?" Suhrawardy pointing his finger contemptuously to Walker said, "You Mr. Walker making a draft for me." Suhrawardy twisting his lips in spite repeated, "You, you Mr. Walker making a draft." And then pointing to him, "I shall read it in the Assembly!" Suhrawardy's patience was exhausted. He asked the chief secretary to quit the room.

Suhrawardy did not believe in formal drawing room. He was not a chairbourne man. The bed was his hideout. That was his sitting room, study room and bedroom. When he was to draft any speech or statement, he would do it lying on the bed. He would rest on his elbow and start work. Then he would turn and twist on the bed in different postures and finish his work.

If he had nothing, courage and dash alone would have made him a remarkable character. In1946, he went about in the riot-torn Calcutta city day and night unarmed and unprotected. Once in Bhawanipur, he was surrounded by a band of hooligans. There was murder in their eyes. Face to face he challenged them, " If you think problems can be solved by killing me, them kill me" The hooligans left stampeded.

Later when he stayed on in Calcutta to work for the Hindu Muslim harmony and when some Hindus threw a time bomb at his car at Beliaghata, the front portion of his car was wrecked. Gandhi threatened hunger strike when he heard of the attempt on Suhrawardy's life. The hooligans apologized to Gandhi.

Some time East Pakistani leaders were problems to him. Ataur Rahman and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are both patriots, battler for parliamentary democracy and complete autonomy for East Pakistan. Yet their rivalry and misunderstanding had been an agonizing event in the Awami League. Ataur Rahman was the parliamentary leader and the Chief Minister. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the secretary General of the party and belonged to hard core of the party. To Suhrawardy both were important. As a chief minister Ataur Rahman was irreplaceable. In the party organization, there was none like Sheikh Mujib. When the party was corroded from within by the

inner feud, Suhrawardy was a distressed man and had to resort to balancing feat with skill in order to please both Ataur Rahman and Sheikh Mujib.

When Bhashani left the Awami League organization along with nine MPAs, Ataur Rahman was an unhappy man with his parliamentary majority reduced. So when some leaders of K.S.P. M.PA.s wanted to join the Awami League party, they were welcomed by Ataur Rahman. Sheikh Mujib was not so keen to accept them because of their ideological unpredictability. Suhrawardy initially agreed to accept them and told Ataur Rahman to "go ahead." But once Suhrawardy had a talk with Mujib, he was a changed man.

When the bitterness and rivalry between Sheikh Mujib and Ataur Rahman became an open secret and the party members speculated that Ataur Rahman might be replaced as a Chief minister, Suhrawardy patted the back of Ataur Rahman and said "Ataur Rahman remains the Chief minister....."

But if he had pampered Ataur Rahman, he had done so with a side glance at Sheikh Mujib. He could not afford to displease Sheikh Mujib. So when the last ministry was formed before martial law in August 1958, Suhrawardy was having a second thought and could not decide whom to make leader of the parliamenrtary party and the Chief Minister.

When the leaders of the Awami League party went to Karachi and sat in the room of Suhrawardy, he said "I wonder who is to form the Government" and pointing out his finger to each one of them said "You! You! You!" Ataur Rahman was disconcerted that his position as an unrivalled leader of the Parliament had been shaken. Suhrawardy had however selected Ataur Rahman as the leader and the latter received the commission from the Governor to form the Ministry. But the intriguing part of the whole thing was that the ministers were selected with the advice of Sheikh Mujib. Ataur Rahman was not consulted and telephonically informed of the names of the new ministers and their portfolios.

Ataur Rahman guessed who had influenced Suhrawardy and felt humiliated. He threatened to return the Commission.

Suhrawardy saw Ataur Rahman at his house and said "That can't be. Don't behave like a child."

It is an irony that the democrat Suhrawardy as a Law Minister staked his prestige and had to contest Tamijuddin's challenge against Ghulam Monhammad's wily dissolution. Tamijuddin thought he was fighting for the very survival of democracy. But a sophisticated democrat as he was, Suhrawardy knew that the Assembly had long lost the last vestige of its popularity and representative character, particularly after the 1954 election in East Bengal and called for its desolution. He could not forgive the Constituent Assembly since as early as 1948, he had been dispossessd of his seat in the Constituent assembly for his lack of citizenship.

Suhrawardy mocked at the Constituent Assembly and called it a "long parliament" He damned it as a bunch of selfish, do-nothing and squabbling politicians out for their own material riches and power. The people too were tired of the futility of the Constituent Assembly; yet the dismissal of this Assembly smacked too much of the authouity of Ghulam Mohammad. The best thing would have been for the members to resign. But in Pakistan the best did not happen.

As an administrator Suhrawardy showed detachment which was often annoying to his immediate well wishers. Doha was not having happy times with the firebrand political disciple Sheikh Mujib. So it happened that when Suhrawardy became the Prime Minister Sheikh Mujib immediately advised Suhrawardy to remove Doha in view of his role during the 1954 election. Suhrawardy counseled toleration and said that existing arrangement should continue. But Mujib, the powerful General Secretary did not relent. At last Suhrawardy called off Doha from the province and appointed him a special officer at the centre.

When Suhrawardy found he had lost a political game, he said, "Life is not meant only for winning. It is also for defeat. In defeat lies chances for more greatness." He would retort to his followers if they insisted on revenge quoting Edmund Burke's famous line, "Little mindand great empire cannot go together."

Firoz Khan Noon, the last Prime Minister of Pakistan before

Martial Law records the following in his diary in a mood of despair and frustration. He prefers to fault Suhrawardy unfairly for providing the immediate cause for Martial Law. In the diary he writes, "Shaheed is no more, a colorful personality, full of brilliance and charm and also repellant habits. He had been my contemporary at Oxford but we never knew each other then. May God rest his soul in peace."

"Shaheed alwaystook ever opportunity to justify his leadership while I mainly concerned with leaving a clean record and making room for others when the time eame. I was extra cautious in my work, not only because of myself but also because I did not wish that there shoul be the slightest cause for dismissing my ministry an thus inflicting the coup de grace against democracy."

"In the endShaheed could not resist the temptation to exercise more influence on the administration and offered to let his party men accept ministrship. But when he was not satisfied with the portfolios, they resigned a day later. That was our death knell and we had played into Iskander's hands."

For all the reservations, Suhrawardy was a successful Prime Minister. He was more dedicated and passionate, more compelling and more capable of commitment and fundamentally he was a democrat and at best a liberal democrat; otherwise he was ideologically an uncommitted man. He was a liberal democrat tempered by moderation and a sense of humanity. The programmer of United Front as embedded in the 21 point manifesto was too demanding and radical. It was so strident that compared with Suhrawardy's liberalism it showed no innovative thrust and mood. The upshot was that he looked more like a middle course between the idealistic socialism of labour party and the unbridled free enterprise of the conservative party of Great Britain.

He was hardheaded pragmatist intent upon exercising power in the best national interests of Pakistan more so for East Pakistan because that was his neglected political home or you may call it a base.

SUHRAWARDY DIES

Heaven will be merciful to this man who lived a stormy and restless life for himself and also for the nation he loved. His was the last effective voice of parliamentary democracy. With him is gone an era of leaders who lived and thrived on their individual brilliance and quality. He died a lonely man-and a tragic death in a hotel in remote Beirut far away from his land of love, his relations and his followers.

Unhappiness was more the fact of Suhrawardy's life; happiness was the euphemism. The fate of Suhrawardy reminds us of Lord Byron's gloomy saying that to be wretched is the fdestiny of all; that to be eminently wretched is the destiny of the eminent. From early days he marched from success to success till he became the Chief Minister of undivided Bengal. . He worked single handedly for the success in the election of 1946, won Bengal for the Muslim League and turned it over to Pakistan. After his success, he was hounded out of the Chief Ministership of East Bengal by a parliamentary election of dubious value.

When he came, he found the door of East Bengal slammed against him and his seat in the Constituent Assembly cancelled because he began to preach Hindu Muslim fraternity and disturb the peace of Nazimuddin. Liaquat Ali Khan called him an "Indian dog" let loose by Jawaharlal Nehru.

When Suhrawardy finally came to Pakistan he lent power and dignity to the opposition and restlessly fought for power and at last got it only for thirteen months as Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Later he found the country overwhelmed by the queer military government of Basic Democracy. While he was dazed by the ominous drift in Pakistan, Ayub slapped him down with EBDO.- a badge of dishonor and thrust him into jail. Humiliated and crushed, he went to Beirut and to death. While in Beirut Suhrawardy wrote a letter to one of his friends in Dhaka, "Life is not worthwhile for myself alone. It is better to die." That was the thought of a patriot.

Towards the late night a heart attack gripped him and the last sign of life that he showed was when he phoned the telephone operator of the hotel. After a little silence there was a second call and

the girl took the phone but the other end was silent. When the hotel staff rushed and opened the door, Suhrawardy was already dead.

When his casket of coffin was lowered from the plane in Dhaka there was a vast sea of humanity who crowded around to have a last look. The truck carrying the bier was a pathetic sight of human grief and helplessness. On the truck lay the casket draped over by the profusion of flowers. There also stood his 20 year old son and half a dozen men fatigued in gloom. There were on the truck Sheikh Mujib and A.T.M. Mustafa, a strange mixture of men who joined together by shared grief stood arching over the casket in dry tears as wilted and withered men. And the truck followed by the heaving millions of somber and sad faces crawled on to the final resting place, the corner of High Court ground, already hallowed the grave of another great hero, A.K. Fazlul Huq.

Suhrawardy will shine through the pages as a prodigious leader, one of the few self- confident patriots whose faith and energies give them a stature that modern mini leaders can only wonder at. When his struggles are viewed in a fading perspective and a truer perception, his life's tale gleams with immortal fire. I asked one Awami League leader, "What is the outstanding quality of Suhrawardy?" He said without a moments' hesitation, "He believed in the liberty of men. That was his passion. He sought for it all his life". He always believed that democracy is immutable. Other political thoughts and ideas may come but they will all fleet past keeping the supremacy of democratic principles shining through the ages.

His life will remain luminous across the pages of history for his inner courage, his drive to go ahead and his sacrifice for the Muslims of Bengal and for Pakistan. He fought for the parliamentary democracy which he believed, is not only a system of government but a moral and a spiritual enterprise. And on 5th December 1963, at the age of 71, he died an unhappy man –a man with an unfinished hope and ambition.

KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN
(1894-1964)

He was slow, sober and sound at times stolid but always unfailingly polite. A man of stunted height, moony-faced Nazimuddin was the dumpy figure of a man. He was never vain of pompous. He did not have sparkle or vivacity of Suhrawardy. He was far from him. If Suhrawady was like and effervescent champagne bottle, Nazimuddin was just a plain glass of water. He was meek, pliable and a little insipid but above all a superb gentleman.

His loyalty to his political bosses and his birth in the Khwaja family of Dhaka Nawabs were the elements of his success. His paralysis of will to act even at times of emergency and his uninspiring personality were the factors of his failure. Here was a gentleman whose image had been cast into two forms – conflicting and disconcerting. To many he was an honorable man unfit to the crudities and vulgarities of politics. To a few he was a crafty, sneaky and far -sighted political strategist. His critics say that behind his genial and innocent face there lived a politician which only his intimate political rivals could know.

His positive qualities were many. He had first of all unflinching loyalty and consistency. Second, he had considerable facility for compromise. Above all he was a man of reason, a man of faith founded on rationality. He never exaggerated and always tended to understate rather than overstate a case. He had modesty, amiable manners and had educated himself from the beginning to be a gentleman –a perfect gentleman at that. Whoever met him once when he was a Prime Minister could never imagine that he was a Prime Minister of ninety million people. No anger of truculence could provoke him into temper. At worst he would remain sad and

protest apologetically "you have misunderstood me, brother". He was a gentleman par excellence.

He was loyal by nature whether it was to the British or the Muslim League. British liked him for his feudal blood and loyalty and lifted him as high as they could. They made him a minister as early as in 1929 and knighted him. Jinnah and Liaquat Ali liked his sincerity and devotion to the Muslim League and with their blessings Nazimuddin climbed successively from the different heights in Pakistan to the position of the Prime Minister. To Ghulam Mohammad he was however an inefficient and a comical figure of a man. Ghulam Mohammad brutally knocked him out from the Prime Ministership.

Nazimuddin had neither the dazzling brilliance nor platform personality of Fazlul Huq or of Suhrawardy. He gave forth a note of intellectual drabness and sterility. Yet he held positions which neither Fazlul Huq nor Suhrawardy could reach. Where as Fazlul Huq landed in the last days of his life as the Governor of East Pakistan and Suhrawardy only as a Prime Minister of Pakistan for thirteen months, Nazimuddin was already the chief minister of East Pakistan, Governor General and the Prime Minister of Pakistan in rosy succession across first six years of Pakistan's history. But how and why? His rise to the different heights in Pakistan politics had been a subtle combination of luck, tenacity, loyalty and East Pakistani birth.

FAMILY HISTORY

Let us took at this man more intimately. Nazimuddin was the scion of Khwaja family of Dhaka- a family of hide merchant turned landlord of Bengal. More precisely he was the son of Shahar Banu, a sister of Khwaja Salimullah. That was his introduction to the society. Few know or remember his father's name. His father was from United Province, called Nizamuddin, a dull and decent gentleman who found the world too tough to squeeze out a living. So he had to live on the mercy of Ahsan Manzil. All throughout he lived an anonymous life in a makeshift extension of the Ahsan Manzil, near the great spectacular flight of stairs. In later years when one of his

friends asked him whether he had gone to his house in U.P., Nizamuddin replied that he never had gone to his house and in fact did not know where it exactly was.

The family had however a chequered and an interesting a career of its own. They originally sprang from a respectable trading family of Kashmir. Years of Dogra rule crippled the Muslims to a state of helplessness and to the lowest jobs. The ambitious forbearers of Nizamuddin had to leave Kashmir to seek his fortune. When they came to Delhi they found that at least they had one talent that was of making money in hide- business. One of the forebearers went on making money and decided to settle there. But Nader Shah, the Central Asiatic tyrant upset his plan, sacked Delhi city turning it into a desolate city of human misery.

So his forbear Khwaja Abdul Wahab moved away for the east. So much was he disturbed that he went on and on to the farthest corner of India that was Assam and settled in a place called Sylhet in about 1757. That was the fateful year of Bengal. They liked Bengal. They liked its bracing and languid climate, its opulence and prosperity and its vast lagoon far away from the cruelties of the Central Asiatic hordes which pounched upon Delhi off and on.

In 1756 when the cruel attack of Ahmad Shah Durrany pillaged Delhi, they knew finally that they would settle in Bengal. In Sylhet they showed usual proficiency in trade and made money in hide, shawl and furs. They also ventured in indigo trade in partnership with some Europeans.

One generation later they moved to Dhaka and settled in a place called Purba Deoraj. Dhaka was already the thriving metropolis of Bengal. By now they were already prosperous merchant and had enough money. But money did not satisfy them.

In Bengal there was different sense of values. Hide business and respectability did not go together. They might spring from a respectable family of Kashmir but that did not count in Bengal. In order to be respectable in those days in Bengal one needed a Zamindar estate, a palace to live in and marital relationship with the leading families of Bengal.

So it was that they invested their wealth in purchasing estates from the decaying nobilities of Bengal. In 1835 they bought a French factory building and with little alteration, they called it Ahsan Manzil and contracted the first marriage relationship with the Zamindar family of Karthikpur.

In 1875, title of Nawab was awarded by the British to Abdul Ghani for his loyalty during s Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. This further added luster and glory to this family. Two years later this title was made hereditary to the eldest member of the line. New pride, and confidence was born into them.

The result was that though this family lived for generations in Bengal, they had maintained their cultural insularity and did not merge with the mainstream of Bengal. All the Pathans and Moghuls who drifted to East Pakistan earlier settled here and disappeared into the anonymity of Bengali populace. But not this family they retained their Urdu tongue and culture of northern India; and the food of Moghul Delhi they relished became their own. Even the marital relationship they contracted was mostly with the Urdu speaking families.

The family has however great contribution to the advancement of the Muslims of Bengal the outstanding son of this family was Salimullah who called all India Muslim Education Conference on two occasions. In 1906 he organsed the birth of the Muslim League in Dhaka and thus projected Bengal into All India politics and wanted it to travel with the thoughts and moods of the rest of Muslim India. Somesay this projection into All India politics was a measure of psychic defence as they felt lonely in the Bengali speaking hinterlsnd. The family is well known for its munificence and built schools, hostels, and orphanage in Dhaka.

Nazimuddin with his blood from U.P. and Ahsan Manzil felt West Pakistan as his spiritual home and West Pakistan treated him as the outpost of their interests. This explains why he readily agreed to the idea of making Urdu as the state language.

When he was governor ceneral he casually and unobtrusively paddled the idea that they came from Kashmir. The eldest son, a genial youngman, got married in a Kashmir family of East Punjab

and was more Pakistani than many Pakistanis, high above local loyalty. Born amid the vices and foibles of the feudal aristocracy, it is a surprise that Nazimuddin remained pure and good- hearted more of a surprise that he got such a high education.

EARLY CAREER

He was groomed by the English tutors in the M.A.O. collegiate school at Aligarh, then at Dunstable Grammar School in England and finally at Cambridge University. The English professors liked him. It is told that due to sickness he could not appear at the final B.A. examination but he was given the degree for his earlier result. Later he was called to the Bar from Lincoln's inn. He liked to be a Barrister but disliked practice. During his stay in England he would sometime try Sherwani and Churidar Pyjama. Though dozens of curious eyes were riveted on him and on his attire, he never felt awkward or apologetic.

Unlike his elder brother Salahuddin who had gone with him to London and married an English lady and settled there he was Muslim true to its tenets and highlighted the finest elements of Islamic virue in his private life. When he returned form England, his father was already dead. His career rolled on with regularity of success. He had the blessings of the British. He grew up under their bracing and protective splendour.

The death of the fathering-law of late NawabHabibullah, Yousuf Zan unfolded before him the first chance of public office-that was the office of the chairmanship of the Dhaka Municipality which Yousuf Zan held for 22 years. To the British, Nazimuddin was the ideal man to be pampered. He had the feudal blood, the loyalty to the British and the traditional ideas and the feeling for the Muslim community.

Nazimuddin thus got a foothold in the ladder of the public office. This was the beginning of the career of this man who later in life rose to a height unforeseeable at the start.

In those days the British wanted to create a class of leaders who would be sympathetic with the interests of the Muslims and yet be steadfast to the wishes and aims of the British. Unless the British

pampered and created leader out of Nazimuddin, another brand of men like Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy would take their place in the Muslim community. Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy were intrinsically rebels. They never bothered for British tittles and at heart had loathing for the Englishmen. So before Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy could catch up the imagination of the people, the British wanted to create a leader out of Nazimuddin by awarding titles like C.I.E. and Knighthood and honorable positions and placing him as an established leader of the Muslim community.

Nazimuddin had everything. He had the introduction of a great family. He had wealth that freed him from abrasion against the tough world. He had the education from the celebrated universities and a cultivated mind-a blend of eastern and western thoughts and ideas.

In 1929 he was made minister of education by the good will of the British and enjoyed its uninterrupted glory till 1934. The interests of the Muslims were dear to his heart. This was the period when Nazimuddin showed his innate sympathy for Muslim Bengal and earned their gratitude by piloting the primary education bill in 1934. It was not however implemented till 1937.

In 1935 he was lifted to the executive council as a member and stayed there till 1936. He ushered in another important bill for the Muslim peasants-the agricultural debtors act to throw economic burden off their backs.

Now in 1935 came the new constitution with prospect for a new election. To Nazimuddin this posed a great nuisance. As a strategist he selected the Patuakhali constituency, a political backwater, where there was not a single important Muslim who could aspire to contest him. Now he began to serve Patuakhali, there own Zamindari estate, with new devotion in order to prepare the people to vote for him in the election of 1937. It was a safe seat for him but to the dismay of Nazimuddin and the Muslim League, Fazlul Huq, a Krishak Proja Party candidate from Pirozpur invaded that constituency unexpectedly and challenged Nazimuddin.

It was going to be a bitter contest, thought the English Governor. But not really. John Anderson the Governor of Bengal was anxious to

see the success of Nazimuddin. With his retinue of officials he went to Barisal and sat in his launch for days together at Barisal ghat, restless and anxious. The Governor watched with pathetic helplessness at the downfall of the British product Nazimuddin, lately turned a Muslim Leaguer at the hands of that prodigious, lovable and tongue-wagging Fazlul Huq. The latter already prepared the crowd by throwing homilies to them in their own dialect and became one of their own.dialect and became one of their own. Nazimuddin wept. In vain went all his efforts and all his public services like the hospitals and tube wells etc. he installed in Patuakhali. But he had the courtesy to congratulate Fazlul Huq.

Nazimuddin somehow scrapped off 6000 votes against Fazlul Huq's 19000 just sufficient to escape with his security deposit. It was a great humiliation that rankled him throughout his life. He saved his security deposit but could not save his honour.

When one Muslim League student worker asked an unsophisticated peasant, "how is it tht you have voted Fazlul fHuq though Nazimuddin has done so much for you". The peasant, "how is it that you have votedFazlul Huq though Nazimuddin has done so much for you". The peasant retorted "But why has he put tax on tobacco and increased the cost of post card". "But that is a central subject, Nazimuddin had nothing to do". "No, he could have solved it if he had just written a post card to the viceroy. He is a man of the Viceroy".

The worker realized that Fazlul Huq must have told the voters these strange stories and convinced them. As Nazimuddin was brooding over his future after his defeat at Patuakhali, Fazlul Huq flamboyantly declared that that he would challenge Nazimuddin in any constituency of Bengal and defeat him.

The challenge hurt Nazimuddin. It also hurt another politician and Muslim Leaguer namely Suhrawardy. Like Fazlul Huq he also emerged successful from the two constituencies in Calcutta, south and north. Suhrawardy accepted the challenge on behalf of Nazimuddin and vacated south seat of Calcutta. Fazlul Huq knew that he had unchallengable sway among the peasants but never knew that Suhrawardy had unshakable influence upon the urban laborers and communities of Muslim Calcutta. Nazimuddin got

elected. Fazlul Huq's pride melted.

In the coalition ministry that followed, Nazimuddin wokded as home minister under Fazlul Huq with distinction. In 1941 at the biding of Jinnah over the membership of Fazlul Huq in the National Defence Council Nazimuddin resigned and went over to the opposition bench along with Suhrawardy and others. In 1943 Fazlul Huq went out of the office after bitter rancour with the Governor.

After the fall of Shyama- Huq ministry the Muslim League had a chance to form ministry. The Muslim League was the single largest party and they wanted to elect Suhrawardy as the leader of Parliamentary party but they themselves could not form majority in the assembly. As such they had to lean upon the Europeans for support. The Europeans, who never warmed up to Suhrawardy decided that if Nazimuddin was elected the leader of the league parliamentary they would lend their support. Thus the block vote of the Europeans that swayed the decision of the parliamentary party went in favor of Nazimuddin.

It is not the modesty and manners of Nazimuddin alone that endeared him to the European community. He had developed a link with the European traders through the trading house of Ispahani, a great and reliable friend of Nazimuddin.

Nazimuddin formed the Muslim League ministry but his reign was ill starred. When Nazimuddin was presiding over the destiny of Bengal as its chief minister in 1943, unlukily for him he had to take the obloquy and infamy for the famine that struck Bengal with all its horror. The famine was a grim reality. Fifty lakhs of people died of starvation and malnutrition. Nazimuddin is not to be blamed for this unhappy fate of Bengal. All throughout the country lay a large part of humanity, naked, starving and crushed. Bengal was in imminent danger of being overrun by the Japanese. Their air force raided Calcutta, Chittagong and Deni. People got panicky at the prospect of an all-out attack by Japan, so was the British Governor. At this time the government of Bengal declared its scorched earth policy and foodstuff where ever available was procured by the govt. go downs. All means of transport were seized by the authority. Their object was to create impediments for the advancing Japanese to seize the rations.

Later due to perfidy of some members, his ministry fell and Fazlul Huq claimed his right to form the ministry. Nazimuddin pleaded to the Governor for another test of his majority the Governor declined and withheld power from either of them and waited for the fateful election of 1946.

BECOMES CHIEF MINISTER OF EAST PAKISTAN

That was 1946, the fateful year for the Muslims of India particularly of Bengal. On the result of election hang the fate of Pakistan movement. To Nazimuddin provincial parliamentary board was aproblem. He knew that in the parliamentary board which issued the nomination, Suhrawardy had the majority. He thought that Suhrawardy would choose only those candidates thatt would later on back him. Nazimuddin would of course be elected but few of his candidates had chances of getting nomination from Suhrawardy. His block would be abject minority. Suhrawardy would be chief minister. He would be just an opposition leader within the party, fuss and feud with Suhrawardy but make no progress towards his ambition.

So he made a tactial and skilled political move which Suhrawardy could not comprehend. He took the role of saintly Aurangzeb talking to Murad. He said to Suhrawardy "I am goingto retire. I am not going to contest the election in order to keep the unity within theMuslim league parliamentary party. But I have thirtyfive men who are loyal Muslim League workers. They may be given tickets". Suhrawardy obliged. Nazimuddin sat out of the provincial assembly leaving his thirty five loyal supporters within it. He was however waiting for a chance for the flowering of his own destiny. At last the chance came.

Partition came in 1947 with varied destiny looming before the Muslims of Bengal. When the Muslim league high command decided to hold a contest for the leadership of the parliamentary party for the new province of East Bengal, Nazimuddin had an advantage. The decision of the Muslim League was questioned by many for its devious way to sidetrack Suhrawardy in order to install their favorite Nazimuddin. West Bengal and Calcutta, The citadel of Suhrawardy's power with all the MLAs was lost to him. To Nazimuddin his thirty five MLAs plus nineteen Sylhet MLAs

unfolded to him a great chance of victory.

Nazimuddin by one political stroke brought these nineteen MLAs to his side and thus contrived the defeat of Suhrawardy as the leader of the parliamentary party. The Sylhet MLAs wanted three ministers from their district in lieu of their support. Nazimuddin readily agreed. In East Bengal when the time for the formation of ministry came Nazimuddin took one minister from Sylhet and cleverly suggested, "Let the MLAs themselves decide about the selection of the rest." The MLAs could never agree. And Nazimuddin was spared the embarrassment of taking three ministers from one district.

Some say that Shahabuddin, his younger brother is the braintruster behind him to scheme the political move and strategy. Some Awami Leaguers say that Nazimuddin himself was the political operator but if any unwholesome move was exposed, Shahabuddin took the blame and kept the imager of Nazimuddin intact.

LOSS OF CALCUTTA

Calcutta is an ungrateful city. It developed on the resources of the hinterland of Muslim Bengal but it nourished the predominantly Hindu zones. When partition came, the Muslims put forth their claim on Calcutta and started 'Keep Calcutta' campaign. The movement was highlighted by the leadership of Fazlul Huq. All the Muslim newspapers were printing the maps and statistical charts to prove the authenticity of their claims. The Muslim Student League was organizing the meetings and bringing out processions throughout Calcutta. Suhrawardy, the last Bengal chief minister and a member of Bengal partition council met Governor Casey at Darjeeling and persuaded the Governor to agree to the declaration of Calcutta as the international city of Pakistan and India.

After the eviction of Suhrawardy from the office of the Chief minister, a sudden change descended upon Muslim League leadership. The League High Command appointed Wasim from U.P. and Hamidul Huq Chowdhury as his assistant to appear before the Radcliff Boundary Commission. They did not even lay their claim on Calcutta before the commission. To Fazlul Huq or Suhrawardy this job was not assigned. It was a great disappointment to Muslims of

Bengal.

Some leaders of Nazimuddin government approached the Ittehed editor to postpone the 'kiip Calcutta' movement. They argued that "If the claim on Calcutta is given up then we shall be entitled to Rs. 30 crores and with that huge amount Dhaka can be built into a great city like that of NewYork." Azad, Star of India Morning News, the papers under the influence of Nazimuddin changed their tunr on the campaign of sharing Calcutta with India. They started commenting in effect "After all the majority are the Hindus. We are minority. We have no claim. Our claim is undemocratic."

Khwaja Nazimuddin had no love or patience for Calcutta. He was eager to come back to Dhaka, his place of birth and build the new government of East Bengal. Many erstwhile supporters of Suhrawardy who betrayed him and supported Nazimuddin in the election of parliamentary leader were also eager to hurry up to Dhaka, as they were afraid of being manhandled by Suhrawardy's followers.

The assets of many Bengal government establishments such as Presidency College, Botanical Garden, Government House, Calcutta Museum, Zoological Garden etc., were not partitioned and the stores were leftover in Calcutta. The leaders were busy with their plans to build their own future in the new state of Pakistan.

NAZIMUDDIN AS A MAN AND A POLITICIAN

His intimate political rivals-only the intimate ones say that in Nazimuddin, despite his gentle and saintly exterior, there lies a man-shrewd and political. A gentleman who prefers his name to be concealed was a protégé of Suhrawardy and wanted to contest Abul Kalam Shamsuddin, a man of Nazimuddin for Muslim League nomination in the ensuing provincial election of 1946. Suhrawardy's candidate got the nomination. Hamidul Huq Chowdhury and Fazlur Rahman cast their lot with Nazimuddin and canvassed for Abul Kalam Shamsuddin. Nazimuddin came forward to congratulate Suhrawardy's man when the latter got the nomination. He told Nazimuddin, "I hope you are not unhappy over my nomination." Nazimuddin protested, "Oh No, I am quite happy. I am only

interested in the success of Muslim League." Others like Hamidul Huq Chowdhury and Fazlur Rahman did not congratulate him and their faces betrayed themselves.

But immediately after congratulation, Nazimuddin Quietly called Abul Kalam Shamsuddin and told, "Please file an appeal against the nomination to the central parliamentary board, I shall look into it." In the central parliamentary board, were Liaquat Ali, Chowdhury Khaliquzzaman and Hossain Imam, to whom Nazimuddin carried much weight. The nomination of Suhrawardy's candidate was set aside on scrutiny. Abul Kalam Shamsuddin felt abashed and embarrassed at his successful appeal.

When he was elected the chief Minister of East Bengal in 1947 he was not even a MLA. But he had to be a MLA within six months. That was difficult in those days as there was no vacancy. Besides a safe seat had to be found out in a by-election. So when the MLA Ahmed Ali Martha joined the public service commission as member, a safe seat fell vacant. But it seemed from some where an unknown person sprang up to contest in the by-election. Nazimuddin wanted no risk of contest. He looked disconsolate. Then he was asked to stand in the vacant seat of D.L. Rahman who was made a district judge. But then again another candidate looked up ominously. Nazimuddin gave up hope in despair. Then at last Principal Ibrahim Khan joined secondary education board as its chairman. For this new vacant seat, suddenly Bhashani stood up to the distress of Nazimuddin. But luckily another seat fell vacant in South Tangail and Moulana was persuaded to stand from the other constituency. Now both Bhashani and Nazimuddin got elected from separate constituencies uncontested.

Jinnah informed Nazimuddin that he would be visiting East Bengal on 19th March 1948. That was the first and last visit of Quid-e-Azam. The language issue that was the demand to make Bengali one of the state languages had turned into a live and intractable problem. The strikes and demonstrations throughout the country upset Nazimuddin. The council of the action committee along with others were called at Burdawan House to meet Nazimuddin for an understanding. Nazimuddin was already disposed to accept the demands of action committee at the advice of Bogra Mohammad Ali. Only when the demands accepted by the chief minister were to be

put in black and white, Nazimuddin wanted the presence of the Chief Secretary and his approval of the agreement.

Nazimuddin then phoned the Chief Secretary Aziz Ahmed to come over to Burdawan house. Chief Secretary declined on some pretext. Possibly he did not want to be a party to the negotiation. Nazimuddin then suggested to the delegates "Why do you not go to the house of the Chief Secretary to settle this issue?" "We don't want to go to him. He is not a public representative. We want commitment from the Chief Minister", came the reply.

Nazimuddin asked them to wait and himself went to the house of the Chief Secretary. Imagine the humiliation he could take for a compromise. After a few minutes Nazimuddin returned. He however accepted in writing the demands of the action committee on the 15th March to head off any impending strike that might mar the visit of Jinnah. It was the meek and the insipid personality of Nazimuddin that inflated the ego of bureaucracy. They developed disrespect for the public representatives and delighted in sharing power and limelight with them.

Qaid-e-Azam trusted Nazimuddin In 1942 Gandhi launched his 'Quit India' Movement, a sinister design to expel the British without settling the issues with the Muslim. Nazimuddin was ready to face the unpredictable situation. Nazimuddin on behalf of the Muslim League Defence committee toured the country to prepare the Muslims against the impending Japanese threat. Again in 1946 as chairman of the Muslim League relief committee, Nazimuddin rendered succour to the Muslims victimized by fire and slaughter in Bihar.

Nazimuddin was a man of deep religious conviction. His ethics were firmly rooted in the moral values of Islam and his admirers say he was slow to understand the subtleties of power and intrigue. He had the warm humanity and innate urbanity. There was no pride or superciliousness in his character. He was kind and loyal to his political workers. He was no vote getter.

The report of the Punjab Enquiry Commission describes him as a man "too honorable to resort to tricks, although it was added in politics, the man is not infrequently lost in the politician. He was said to be inspired by the sincerity of purpose but because of his religious approaches he was intensely afraid of a head on clash with

the Ulema."

He was loyal and faithful to his political patrons. His loyalty had at times taken such a blind and absurd turn that he became a law and order problem in East Bengal. Jinnah had come to Dhaka on the 19th March in 1948. Before a meeting in the race course he declared that Urdu alone should be the state language and no other language. Some students protested, "No, No." Jinnah was shocked to silence and brooked for a while and the turned back to his seat.

Nazimuddin got the cue what to say about the language issue. When he was a prime minister he visited Dhaka in February 1952. New self assurance returned to him. Nazimuddin, a pliable man carried away by the personality of Jinnah re-echoed the speech" Urdu alone should be the state language" and set off violence that was to engulf the whole of East Pakistan. This posture of Nazimuddin was a rude shock to many because he entered into an agreement to make Bengali as a state language as early as 1948.

Born and bred in a little cloistered world of his own in Ahsan Manzil and cut off from the ebb and flow of the East Pakistani thought and culture, little did he realize how deeply the sentiments of Bengalese were hurt.

The death of Jinnah in September 1948 stunned the nation. It removed the patriarch and shook the national confidence for some time. The chief Minister Nazimuddin hurried to Karachi to attend the funeral. On the fifth day the cabinet presided over by Liaquat All chose Nazimuddin as the Governor General. So long overshadowed by the personality of Jinnah, Liaquat Ali now tried to emerge as the effective prime minister. For the success of the parliamentary democracy Liaquat Ali looked for a ceremonial head. Nazimuddin's soft and gentle personality was a qualification for the job. His Bengali origin further stimulated this decision. As a Governor General he performed his ceremonious duty with dignity, obscurity and high minded patriotism. But he was not content. He wanted power.

Nazimuddin was at heart no less a power loving man. He had tasted of power as a chief minister of undivided Bengal and then as a chief minister of East Bengal. The death of Liaquat Ali at the hand of

an assassin brought into fore the love for power that lay quiescent in his mind. The democratic urge among the people recoiled in successive shocks from the impatience of the politicians.

Nazimuddin stepped down as the prime minister and lifted Ghulam Mohammad almost an invalid but a strong willed man to the position of the head of state. This is the beginning of the erosion of democracy. The action of Nazimuddin to appoint himself as the prime minister was negation of democratic principles. He did not have the patience to ask the Muslim League parliamentary party to elect him their leader as was expected from a democrat.

Nazimuddin awkwardly declared that "that cabinet today has given me the onerous responsibility to become Pakistan prime minister." But where was the cabinet? It was supposed to have died with the death of the prime minister. Such a defunct cabinet could not select a prime minister. Ministry was not of his selection either but they were of the old cabinet left over by Liaquat Ali.

What was worse, the National Assembly which is fountain of all powers and watch dog of the democratic rights succumbed to the executive and ratified the unconstitional process of power without demur. This was all a mockery of all elementary principles and conventions of democracy. Nazimuddin must take the burden of history's odium for initiating such undemocratic action. By now the democracy began to die by inches. The action of Ghulam Mohammad was of course the most explosive focus of snuffing out democracy.

Educated in Cambridge and Lincoln's Inn and working his way through democratic processes to different positions in the past, it was a wonder why he threw away impatiently the democratic principle and morality. If Nazimuddin could do it, how much could we expect of a career bureaucrat like Ghulam Mohammad to abide by the democratic principles. When he resorted to unconstitutional act to appoint himself as the prime minister he did not mind it. But when Ghulam Mohammad dismissed him he was aghast at the unconstitutional act of Ghulam Mohammad. His Prime Ministership was born illegally and it died also illegally. It seems nature had a cruel way of taking things.

This was the man upon who descended the onerous task of

providing Pakistan with a constitution. Unhappily for him, Pakistan was during this time assailed with the problems that were to overwhelm him. The reign of Khwaja Nazimuddin was pockmarked by crisis of confidence, economic reverse and threat of famine. The boom created by Korean War which had boosted the export of jute and cotton collapsed due to armistice. Popular aspiration for better living standard was thwarted by fecklessness of leadership. The inflated expectation gave way to fisting tide of resentment. The rapid increase of population began to swallow the gains in per capta incomes.. He had neither the talent nor the drive and energy to resolve the problems that beset the country.

Kashmir problem remained an irritant blot on the face of Pakistan and held the key to the shaping of the foreign policy of Pakistan. Pakistan's hostile neighbor India which had by now gained a certain measure of international esteem by posing as a leader of so-called third power block, remained contemptuous to Pakistan. Pakistan lay anguished under the cynical violation of the UN resolutions.

The descent of Muslim League particularly in East Pakistan brought dismay to the people who saw in this organization only hope for the integrity of Pakistan. Here and there sprang up political parties with bold economic programmers. The Muslim League became and aging and slothful organization. The alleged concentration of wealth in West Pakistan brought resentment to the people of East Pakistan and the Central government loomed as the symbol of exploitation. This was once fixed on British imperialism and then on Brahmins was now fastened on the Central Government at Karachi. These were these all. Soon West Pakistan was convulsed with bizarre religious movement which shook the foundation of the govt. The anti Ahmadia agitation in Lahore was the gravest upheaval since her birth. There exists in Pakistan a sect variously called as Ahmadias or Qadiani founded by. Mirza Ghulam Mohammad (who was born at Qadiani in the Punjab) in 1935 and later he began to make mystical claims regarding him. In 1901 he formed Ahmadia society, which at his request was shown in the census records as a separate Muslim sect.

The view held by the Ahmadias on Hajrat Mohammad as the last prophet is annoying to the Muslims. The hostility of Muslims in

general towards the Ahmadias was steadily mounting. As the government continued to ignore their activities they became bolder and bolder in their challenges to law and order. They presented to the government three demands for acceptance: (a) The Ahmadias to be declared a separate minority (b) Sir Zafrullah Khan to be removed from the post of Foreign Minister, (c) Ahmadias to be removed from key posts. Mr. Zafrullah, despite his unsavory past association with the British enjoyed a reputation as a scholar and jurist and later became a judge of the International High court.

The months of inertia by Nazimuddin did very little to crush the developing crisis. The vaccilation of the central govt. enabled Daulatana, the Chief Minister of West Pakistan to try to switch the mounting clamour against Nazimuddin to toss him out and take his place. The religious cast of Nazimuddin's mind made the confrontation with the Ulema most difficult.

At the climax of widespread disturbances Daulatana telephoned Nazimuddin "to accept the demands or else anything might happen". Nazimuddin was perplexed. Piety struggled wtyh his sense of duty. But unluckily for Daulatana, Defence minister Iskander Mirza was sitting beside Nazimuddin when the telephone comes. Mirza was goading the vaccilating Nazimuddin the declare Martial Law and bring to book the culprits. Mirza said "Martial law is being proclaimed immediately and I am informing the GOC accordingly." In fact the Martial Law was proclaimed and kept in force until May, 1953.

Despite the onerous problems that baffled him Khwaja Nazimuddin presented the report of the Basic principles committee to the constituent assembly on 22nd December, 1952." The report Report was born in sincerity and in fanaticism. The recommendations made provision whereby no laws could be enacted which were repugnant to the holy Quran and the Sunnah. Boards of Ulama were to be set up embracing persons learned in Islamic law to whom all proposed legislation would be referred to in order to ensure that nothing repugnant to the Quran and the Sunnah should be enacted. In fact the Ulema would have virtual veto on the workings of the legislature. This was exactly what the Ulemas wanted. The

provisions reflect the extreme religious sentiment of Nazimuddin. Much of it was impractical and clashes with the principles of a modern state visualized by Jinnah. Nor was it consistent with the views of Ghulam Mohammad. While addressing the Asiatic Society of Pakistan on February, 1953 the Ghulam Mohammad said " in Pakistan there was no room for theocracy and in Islam no room for priest craft".

Khwaja Nazimuddin however said "a single nation consisting of Muslims and non-Muslims with equal rights of citizenship is not my view of an Islamic state". Frustrated in his design to see the dearly conceived Ulema board popular, Nazimuddin only temporized and let the time pass by. When Nazimuddin was the Governor General the power lay with the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. When Nazimuddin was the prime minister the power lay with the Governor General Ghulam Mohammad. It seems power always eluded him and was never within his grasp.

Nazimuddin was no match to Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy in talent or leadership quality and as such would neither understand nor forgive them. Nazimuddin knew very well that anybody who could challenge his leadership of East Bengal was Suhrawardy or Fazlul Huq. Suhrawardy was left out of frustration in Calcutta and joined hands with Gandhi to bring about peace and harmony among the Hindus and Muslims. When he arrived in Dacca Nazimuddin dubbed him as an Indian agent and the East Bengal govt. ordered Suhrawardy to leave Dacca and the East Bengal in 1948.

Fazlul Huq who stayed back in Calcutta after partition was brooding in frustration. Fateful development began to take shape in the subcontinent without him. He felt stung that he had no place in the new scheme of things. The story has it that he impossibly confided to his friends and his relations that he would stay permanently in Calcutta. Thus for a moment it looked that Nazimuddin had been able to bypass two tough adversaries who might pose a threat to his unchallengeable sway in East Bengal. But the humanism in Fazlul Huq did not allow him a life of retirement in Calcutta. . He soon came to Dhaka.

The malice and hostility of Nazimuddin's govt. towards Fazlul Huq began to manifest in all its excesses. Soon after his arrival in Dhaka, Fazlul Huq settled down in a house at K. M. Das lane. No

sooner had he purchased it, the East Bengal Govt. decided to requisition the house and sent notice for requisition. When Fazlul Huq threatened to sue the govt. then only they retreated with the requisition order. Though clean-shaven Nazimuddin was devoutly religious. He was particular about the religious observance. In prayer, in keeping the Ramzan fast and in the other formal obligations of Islam he was always known to have been scrupulous.

Nazimuddin always believed "Islam is a practical religion and exists for always." Though he lived in England for years together he could still say to and European friend "It is strange that men and women should dance together, and the attire of western ladies sometime bordered on the immodest." The ladies of his house, it goes without saying, observe traditional purdah and marriage within the family is a common feature.

Nazimuddin's religious views were not very bigotry. Between the modernists and the Mullas he would steer a course somewhat leaning towards Mullas. He however considered his faith a live and dynamic one, not ossified and crusty but capable of growth and change. Nazimuddin's one outstanding quality was that he could get on with the people of different tastes, prejudices, background and temperament. This is one of the virtues that held him in power for so long. He was very easy, courteous, considerate with great and small alike.

He lacked the charisma of a leader. He simply could not mesmerize the populace. He delivered his Churidar and Sherwani he cut a dumpy, almost grotesque figure when he was called upon to review the troops on ceremonial occasion. He brought to the govt. a new kind of leadership. He governed by a consensus, billed himself as a great compromiser but was not always sensitive to the truculent political currents. His stress was on tolerance, temperance and quiet restraint. Though these qualities have often made his govt. seem dull, weak and ineffective, nobody questioned his sincerity or dedication.

DISMISSAL BY GHULAM MOHAMMAD

The dismissal of Nazimuddin is a chilly event in the unhappy history of Pakistan Here is the intriguing story behind the dismissal of Nazimuddin. In April, 1953 Khwaja Nazimuddin, prime minister of Pakistan was holding a comfortable majority in the national assembly. Having passed the budget in the parliament and restored order in Lahore by Martial Law after his initial bungling he was happy with himself. But soon a new twist was in the making. Never could he realize that Ghulam Mohammad the titular head of state would jettison him out of power. When Nazimuddin faltered in resolving the problems Ghulam Mohammad's intuition was only justified. His patience was exhausted. Strong and long used to authority he was not in a mood to remain a passive standby.

There was another reason which though private galled him immensely. There was pathological hatred and rivalry between Ghulam Mohammad and Fazlur Rahman. In the cabinet Ghulam Mohammad was virtually the leader of Punjabi group and Fazlur Rahman headed the Bengali group. Fazlur Rahman was stubborn, shrewd and obstinate. Devaluation had been the agonizing focus of Ghulam Mohammad's antagonism against Fazlur Rahman. Ghulam Mohammad advised devaluation but Fazlur Rahman preferred otherwise. The Prime Minister Liaquat Ali agreed with Fazlur Rahman and Pakistan did not devalue. It seemed to Ghulam Mohammad that Fazlur Rahman was the only obstacle to his power and ego.

When Ghulam Mohammad was the Governor General he decided to pursue his old vendetta. He asked Nazimuddin to remove Fazlur Rahman from the cabinet. Ghulam Mohammad even sounded Bogra Mohammad Ali when he was an Ambassador to the US if he would take up the ministry of commerce and industries in place of Fazlur Rahman. Neither Fazlur Rahman would resign nor Nazimuddin would dismiss him. Ghulam Mohammad then made up of his mind to dismiss Nazimuddin cabinet altogether. He resorted to a ploy. He contacted the individual ministers privately whom he decided to re-appoint after the dismissal of Nazimuddin and unfolded a plan to force resignation of Nazimuddin and of Fazlur Rahman.

As planned Ghulam Mohammad called a cabinet meting which Ghulam Mohammad was to address. In the meeting Governor General talked of the various problems of the country which the cabinet failed to solve. He particularly talked about the food problems and said "The cabinet has completely failed to solve it." Then one by one all the ministers as planned earlier offered the resignations except Nazimuddin and Fazlur Rahman who knew nothing about the plan. Then Ghulam Mohammad looked at Nazimuddin, a witless Falstaffian figure sitting tight just across the table. Ghulam Mohammad asked "What about you. Are you submitting your resignation?" Nazimuddin remained silent and bewildered. Then Ghulam Mohammad suddenly without lifting his voice said "Then I dismiss you", and quietly walked out of the room.

Soon the official communiqué was out. It appeared the communiqué was already typed and kept ready. Ghulam Mohammad knew that Nazimuddin would most likely refuse to resign. But he wanted to avoid the dismissal and planned the voluntary offer of resignation. Ghulam Mohammad thought that along with other ministers a Nazimuddin mighty be prompted to submit his resignation on impulse.

Ghulam Mohammad's desire to dismiss Nazimuddin bloomed privately. If Nazimuddin knew what was coming he would have asked the Queen to dismiss Ghulam ohammad. But Nazimuddin lay happy and quiet resting on his strength in the national parliament and on the wisdom of Fazlur Rahman. He could never convince himself that Ghulam Mohammad had such a sinister design. Fazlur Rahman always comforted him saying "Ghulam Mohammad will never dare dismiss the cabinet". When Bogra Mohammad Ali came to Karachi on 6th April, 1953 and smelled the conspiracy he told Nazimuddin, "Ghulam Mohammad is planning to dismiss you". Nazimuddin protested, "Oh, No! he wanted to remove Fazlur Rahman. You are talking like a child. You do not know". Next day an intelligence branch officer cautioned him that Governor General was trying to oust him. The prime minister snubbed him, "You are also trying to be a rumour monger. You are preparing your way for your arrest". Seven days later Nazimuddin was dismissed.

Nazimuddin when he heard about his dismissal first could not

believe it. When he got over the initial shock he tried to contact the Queen but he found the telephone disconnected. The Governor General's action was a personal seizure of power. More precisely to pave the way for bureaucratic grip over the country. The dismissal opens a new chapter in the grim kremlin type of struggle for power.

The story has it that when Nazimuddin complained to Ghulam Mohammad about his dismissal and said that as Governor General he always behaved correctly to Liaquat Ali Khan, the latter replied "Come, come, Khwaja Sb. Neither are you Liaquat Ali nor am I Nazimuddin".

When Nazimuddin was dismissed from rime Ministership he was still the President of the Pakistan Muslim League. He still showed his intention of lingering in that capacity by nominating new members in the working committee including two deposed cabinet ministers. He did not want to relax the last grip on some semblance of power. To the country in general and act of political might was feared, honoured and at times welcomed. Nazimuddin's lack of ability and quickness of mind to settle the problems eroded his popularity. At the executive head Pakistan needed a robust and virile man who could trample his way through hazards and perils that confronted the nation. It is an irony that Ghulam Mohammad's bold stroke against Nazimuddin was acclaimed with hundreds of congratulations and support. People forgot for the time being that Ghulam Mohammad had broken the back of democracy. The Muslim League party was ungrateful and bowed before the new image of power and strength. But it was the image of dictatorship under the guise and blessings of popular support untested by election or referendum.

Some Awami League leaders were in fact not unhappy over the dismissal of Nazimuddin by Ghulam Mohammad. Here is the facetious comment of Ataur Rahman in his book "Ojaratir Dui Basra" "Khwaja Nazimuddin was a good man. He was all right as a governor general. But then he was ill starred when he took over as the prime minister. The responsibility was quite heavy. He was naturally concerned but everybody around comforted and encouraged him. In fact the Muslim League, they assured, will always standby to him and none shall dare touch him."

"Poor Nazimuddin! He grew up under the tutelage of the British and learnt sense of patriotism from them. He never cared to learn what democracy is and never felt the need of it. He turned his wrath against democracy from the beginning and directed all his efforts against the opposition.

Nazimuddin order, 'Get out.' Suhrawardy went out. The tyranny and oppression continued unabated. Distressed by the autocracy of Nazimuddin I once told a friend rather sadly, brother, I have tried to pray to Allah all through my life. I wonder now whether at this stage I shall die as a Kafir. My friend was astonished. He said 'Are you mad? What are you talking?' I explained, 'Listen to me first and then rebuke me. I have read in the books that in ancient days Allah punished the Farauns like Shaddad and Namrud. At present He seems unable to punish the posterity. When I develop this doubt, what is left of my faith in Allah?

'No, No,. It is not so simple an argument as that. Allah does not act according to our light and sense of justice. His ways are of his own. He controls and regulates the universe in his own way. There is no deviation from His rule. None interferes with Him, Assured my friend. One day while I was addressing a meeting at Paltan Maidan suddenly news reached me that Nazimuddin had been dismissed by Ghulam Mohammad. In his place Bogra Mohammad Ali had been installed. I happened to eet the friend again I was repentant and said, 'God is all powerful. He can make a live man dead. He can turn the dead in to life. I could not unravel the mystery of Allah earlier. I could never entertain the fantastic idea that Bogra would be made the prime minister of Pakistan.' We now see it with our own eyes. Faith in the justice of Allah returned to me in all its earnestness."

BECOMES A LEADER OF COUNCIL MUSLIM LEAGUE

After Nazimuddin was thrust out of power he lived for many years in the anonymity of apolitical life and was confined to his rented house at 27, New Eskaton Road, Dhaka. The passage of years lent dignity and honor to his retirement.

When President Ayub allowed the revival of political parties,

Nazimuddin was again tangled into politics. A month after the Karachi convention of Muslim League, a segment of original Muslim League which loathed the present regime, revived parallel Muslim League. They called the council session at Dhaka and elected Nazimuddin its first president.

Thus Nazimuddin who was in political hibernation for long after the graceless dismissal got a platform to rouse his inhibited political ambition. Long used to politics, its power and fame, Nazimuddin's retirement was just a compulsive one. And he could not resist the enticing call from the Muslim League workers. He responded promptly. In those days of political wilderness, he was writing his memoir but now he abandoned it. His memoirs, had he written could have been an interesting and historical study. It is rather strange that none of the three leaders, Fazlul Huq, Suhrawardy or Nazimuddin left behind any record of their broad and eventful lives.

Nazimuddin's rejection of the constitution of 1962 was total and unambiguous. He declared "As long as I remain president of the Muslim League, the party will not be interested in joining the present government because I feel under the constitution; it is not possible to give effect to all the policies enunciated in the Muslim League resolutions." Khwaja Nazimuddin was not a member of the national assembly. He sought to gather popular support by calling mass meetings. His meetings were often disrupted by violence. His effort to rouse the people against the govt. and its constitution was not very successful. He lent no charisma or image for fresh and vigorous leadership. His opposition was not however for opposition sake. His opposition was not tempered by routine hostility or rancour. Nazimuddin asked his supporters in the national assembly to vote with the government on the amendment of fundamental rights. This directive mobilized the key votes necessary for the two third majorities. But it prompted the resignation of Sardar Bahadur Khan, the leader of the opposition. As a leader of the opposition he declared on the 14th December 1962 "The people who talked of secession would be dealt with as traitors and hanged publicly" Ayub Khan had respect for Nazimuddin. When he was a G. O. C. in Dhaka. Nazimuddin was the chief minister of East Bengal. Later in life as a president of the eouncil Muslim League when he rejected the 1962 constitution, President Ayub regretted "Ayub however added

that Khwaja Shaheb was "a personal friend and a gook pious man."

He was the organizer and the cement of the combined opposition that was pitted against Ayub Khan in the election of 1965. Nazimuddin along with Choudhury Mohammad Ali, Moulana Bhashani, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman approached Miss Jinnah and persuaded her to stand against Ayub Khan.

NAZIMUDDIN – AN INTIMATE STUDY

There is an interesting sidelight to his character. He liked to read detective novels in his spare time. Even when he was the chief minister of Bengal, his study rooms were cluttered with the paperback detective novels. He preferred books of Agatha Christie, Perymason, etc. Though he was a man of religious bent of mind, no books on spiritual bias were found. This seems incredible but it is true. His friends were surprised to find such odd side in his character. What was more surprising was that he had possession of the books on detectives of latest publication. One of his friends who wondered his eyes upon one of his books was amused to find that the book published in the current year in US. The hobby of Nazimuddin was poultry farming. When he was a Governor General he procured better bred of poultry from England. After he was tossed out of power he tried to pursue his old hobby in right earnest to keep himself occupied..

Here is an amusing anecdote about his life in Cambridge. When he was a student in Cambridge he lived a virtuous life. He did not drink. To him it was a taboo. His friends tried to make him drink but he would not touch it. Just to tease him his friend Nawabzada Latifur Rahman held a wine glass near his lips and took a photograph as if he was drinking. There is another anecdote about him. One of the Aligarh graduates and high officials of Pakistan Embassy in Washington was bragging to Shoaib, a World Bank official that Aligarh students filled up all the key posts in Pakistan. Shoaib was a student of Delhi University. And there existed a great rivalry between Delhi and Aligarh University. The Aligarhians rattled off the names of Aligarhians in rapid succession: the first prime minister and second gover nor general, second prime minister, third governor general. The third prime minister was not an

Aligarhian but all his four brothers were Aligarhians.

Then Shoaib replied, "Do you know Nazimuddin was only for one year in Aligarh. That also he failed in the school there".

The Aligarh student insisted "Even then he could rise to such a height." The fallen prime minister lived comfortably, pitiable and unsung. Once he thought he would live away the next years of his life in the privacy of his home in happy domesticity with his sons and daughter. The story has it that Nazimuddin after his political eclipse passed his time in the company of his daughter. This dear child came to the house of Nazimuddin in the morning and left in the evening. Few know that Nazimuddin was a tireless story teller. He loved to tell the stories of kings and queens of the olden days to his daughter.

Ghulam Mohammad had no respect for Nazimuddin since their early days. He was a contemporary of Nazimuddin at Aligarh. When some one complained against Nazimuddin to the Governor General Ghulam Mohammad, he would sometime enjoy recounting a story about the discomfiture of Nazimuddin in their student days. Once during the cold wintry naught some students wanted to make fun of Nazimuddin. They poured cold water on the bed of Nazimuddin and laid out a dry blanket over the bed hiding the sign of dampness inside. At late hours when Nazimuddin liked to sleep and lie down on the body he found to his horror that the bed was wet and he would shout and curse. But none came to his help. Nazimuddin had to wait for hours till some friends rescued him with some dry bed.

NAZIMUDDIN – HIS PLACE IN HISTORY

History will remember him as a man of virtue and a gentleman though not great. He was the product of Nawab family not that of Bengal and its heritage. His world was the narrow confines of the feudal aristocracy. He was bred if not born to lead Muslim Bengal but because of his background he was an anachronism in Bengal politics and its aspiration. Nazimuddin had been good, a man of piety and constricted, not so expansive and exciting as that of Fazlul Huq or Suhrawardy. He fell flat and sterile before them. His apparent solemnity concealed his self doubt and inadequacies.

He could never catch the inner torment of the Bengali Muslims,

their urge and impulse. It was therefore not surprising that he could speak without meaning any harm to the Bengalis that Urdu alone should be the state language and set off violence and death He was never a vibrant and an outgoing personality. Legend never invested him with any glory. He was a gentleman, wellmeaning, patriotic, uninspiring and at times dull.

He could never rise to a dazzling height in leadership quality nor could he sink below a certain respectable minimum. He stood some where in the middle embodying those qualities which are common by the vast majority. He was no platform personality, no demagogue and no whipper of frenzied public emotion. The result was that he was never a mass leader but in loyalty and in common Islamic virtues. He had none to excel him. While he stayed most of his life in the summit of power and position he was never strident. And power always eluded him. His modesty was carried to a point where he was called inefficient, insipid and unequal to the problems that confronted the nation.

If you ask any man what Nazimuddin had done for the Muslim, he can not possibly remember it. Not because Nazimuddin had not done much but as his actions and contributions have been unexciting and undramatic, the people tend to praise and ignore him. There is an echo of classical tragedy in the career of Nazimuddin. All through his life he had known only one political party that is the Muslim League. He had been an emphatic and consistent Muslim Leaguer.

The intolerance and fanaticism of Hindus was only matched by his determination and distaste and shoved him closer and closer to Jinnah. If his lack of firm resolve, vigour, strong gifts of leadership and powers of quick decision were his weaknesses, his sincerity fo purpose, his constancy and his respect to the political patrons were his primary virtues. He had been steadfast to the cause of the Muslims and of Pakistan. He obediently discarded the knighthood conferred by the British at the call of Qaid-e-Azam dismayed by the betrayal of Wavell.l.

It was an irony of fate that though Ghulam Mohammad was installed as Governor General on the recommendation of Nazimuddin, it was Ghulam Mohammad who worded hisdoom.

Nazimuddin, a small tubby man was an antithesis of Ghulam Mohammad both in looks and in sense of values.

Nazimuddin was killed long before he was dead. In the words of Victor Hugo he had only the injustice of his fate and the justice of his cause. In later years he sat in Karachi disgruntled he watched with misgiving at Pakistan hurtling towards drift and chaos. He grew remote as the life delivered its blows. Any one who had seen during his last days seemed to feel that he gave forth a note of sadness, as if he was nursing a secret sorrow and he was not certainly a happy man when he died.

Now he is in his grave along with Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy, his inveterate political adversaries. So long as they lived, they fussed and fought with each other. When one was lifted to power and eminence another stood sulky and sullen. Their fame and glory seemed to rotate around them in turn. When the passerby skirts the corner of the High Court he looks at the graves of these three sons of Bengal with reverence and awe; each one carried with him a history of Bengal with all his pride, storm, passion and many a frustrating year.

MOULANA BHASHANI
(1880-1976)

Moulana Bhashani is not a communist. He is no practitioner of Karl Marx. But his political convictions carry him to the brink of communism. Moulana is no doubt fascinated by the classless society of communism but frankly dreads the godlessness in it. After all he remains a Moulana. Says he "I admire everything about China except its godlessness."

Bhashani is no intellectual and does not bother about dialectical materialism. Talk to him, you will be impressed by his canny intuition in politics, his patriotism and his present wisdom. A man of iron will, a demagogue and an inveterate hater of compromise-that is Moulana. To many millions, he is however a living saint and a savior.

In Pakistan the Communist party is outlawed. The nearest approach to communism is the National Awami Party. But its top leader is a Moulana. His very title carries now more a political, rather than a genuine religious ornamentation. Somehow the leftist thoughts have geen wedded to his religious tenets.. This is an anachronism but has been oddly accepted by the countrymen. Moulana Bhashani is no doubt the patron saint of the leftists in Pakistan. To start with Moulana was not a revolutionary but as the plight of the people worsened, he drifted into revolutionary stance – the last stand of a patriot.

From his early adolescence, Bhashani was an impassioned wonderer among his people, the underclass of rural Pakistan. He knew the countryside and carried its sorrows with him from meeting to meeting. With each emaciated baby and hungry peasant around the

country he saw his hatred of the authority depending and got himself prepared for sacrifices.

His approach to the problems of the country has been rather low-keyed. He is at his flamboyant best when he talks about foreign police of the country. And at that moment at least the foreign policy is all that matters. His admirers say that Moulana's passion was the anti-imperialism. He studied and brooded over this question more than anybody else in Pakistan. All his actions seem to be governed by this passion. When the Ayub's government slowly gravitated towards precarious path of neutrality between the two overwhelming blocks of the world, it was Moulana's heart that was cheered and warmed. That explains why he veered towards that government. There may be a streak of unbalanced of disproportionate weightage but never the sincerity was at stake of questioned. Moulana is magnetic and lovable. He is no mystic, but he likes the rituals. Meetings and conferences are more like rituals and ate of psychic importance to him.

Moulana is a self educated man and still does not speak English. His disciples however say so much is the nimble brain of Moulana that from a few words of English he understands; he can grasp the main contents of a letter. His critic is derisive about his leadership quality and claims that a man like him cannot be the leader of the intellectuals and is likely to confuse the national issues. But many adore him and believe he is the only leader who can bring economic bliss to the mute millions in the country.

Moulana is a religious man and observes all its formalities. He is however an eclectic theologian. Bhashani completely ignores the fatalistic aspect of Islam. He argues "My religious is revolutionary and I am a religious man. Therefore it is my religion to rise up against wrong."

Polygamous man though he is, his private life is balanced and is above reproach. He is a strange mixture of sophisticated political ideas and simple, earthy ways of life. His first wife is a lady of virtue but at times is given to uncontrollable fury. Moulana is by no means handsome. There is a gleam in his eyes – the gleam of an idealist. His chubby face overgrown with profuse beard has a resolute mouth and a substantial nose and is backed by globular body. He has fatty

tissues gracefully distributed and is covered by white Kurta and Lungi which make him at once a venerable Moulana and an attractive leader of the peasants.

Moulana is a tireless orator. He can at times be a rabble-rouser. To him however the crowd is no rabble. They are the people whose heartbeat he understands and He can distill in their language. He says what they want to hear – and something more. Even if Moulana has nothing to say he can still keep the audience spell bound for hours together; Bigger the crowd more eloquent and at times more irrelevant he becomes. Yet the people like to hear him and feel that he is projecting their pain and sorrow. Once I saw him in 1956 haranguing the public in Purina Paltan meeting in Dhaka, his beard flapping in the wind. He was cataloguing the misdeeds of former chief minister Nurul Amin of Muslim League. You feel he likes the stage and the spotlight.

Some other time I saw him standing on the speaker's platform and surveying the crowd just before his speech. He then swung from place to place on the platform and poured venom on the Muslim League leaders with the abandon of a desperate being.

Moulana has immense sacrifice while he was in Assam. Before partition he was the President of the Assam Muslim League. The chief sources of his power are many. Take instance his appearance- the fan like thick beard, his appeal and his image as a religious man. His critics have not much to say against him as he never held any office.

Then mark his oratorical brilliance that captivates the masses and uneducated, his simple habits and down to earth living among the peasants. He has natural instinct for self preservation in politics under different hues. He believes in showmanship to keep his image alive. Had he not been a political leader he would have still emerged in the forefront as a religious leader and earned his living. He lives mostly on gifts from his followers and likes to be surrounded by them- a Gandhian trait. Politically however he is more of a Mussadegh than Gandhian. His sense of self-respect and patriotism is quite acute and sharp; and at times he could be peppery. While on his first visit to London, an English reporter asked "When are you going to pull out the Pakistanis from Great Britain?" He snapped

back, 'When the English tea planters pull out and their plantations are nationalized." The reply was too much for the reporter who left the room immediately.

Moulana had too unpleasant moment during his stay in London. There is a story which is possibly apocryphal. Bred amid the peasants of Bengal with their poor resources, Moulana could not satisfy the land lady by his living standard. One day when the land lady was trifle disrespectful to him, Zamiruddin, the former political secretary of a chief Minister of East Pakistan who accompanied Moulana to London tried to persuade the land lady to believe that Moulana is a leader of fifty million people. The land lady was surprised and asked, "Can such a man be leader of a country." Poor land lady! She had never seen Moulana in action.

His manners and postures are captivating. He has whim, grit and resilience. He knows when to stand erect and when to bow down. He has sparkle, bounce and vivacity. Experience has been his chief guide and he mostly trusts his intuition. His art in private discussion is to understand the opposite point of view and treat it with so much sympathy and good humor that the hearers are often led to believe themselves in agreement with him or at any rate that the remaining differences are small and not final. This sometimes leads to disappointment and he is unfairly called hypocrite.

EARLY CAREER

Moulana originally comes from an obscure peasant family of Sirajganj in Pabna. When he was still a boy of 12 he left for Tangail. He carried nothing from home except the blessings. There he grew up studying in Muktub (religious school) and later earned his living as a Moulvi and spiritual doctor distributing his Tabiz and Sajmassallah for cure of the affiliated men. He had hardly any former education save his learning in a village Muktub. His detractors would say disparagingly "He is at best a Munshi.. Why do you call him Moulvi?" It is told he was at first called Moulana by Hindus.

Here in Tangail he showed his flair for agitation. He roused the people's wrath against the Zamindar of Humayunnagar for the Zamindars grabbing of a wakf property. He brought into focus the

sinister act of a Hindu Naib of Muslim Zamindars who usurped the Zamindary Estate by guile and deceit. He hurled bitter tirade against the new Zamindary and threatened direct action against him. When Zamindars asked him pointedly "Why do you agitate and create trouble?" Moulana replied "Ah! You would not recognize and treat me as an equal unless I agitate and create trouble for you." Moulana was externed in turn from Mymensingh, Pabna, Rangpur and ultimately from the province. He then went to Assam.

In Assam he hardened and perfected his skill to agitate and mobilise the peasants and feel the immensity of their organized power. In Assam he settled in a Char (silted islet) called Bhashani Char on Brahmaputra at Goal Para. Here in Assam he emerged as a Peer for his devotion to religion, distribution of Tabiz and also for giving blessings to his disciples. There gathered around him some bands of disciples who glorified his virtues and religiousity. He was now called a Bhashani Char Pir Saheb. But politics was in his blood. He could not forsake it. In about 1932 he was a young man of restless spirit, intense, full of verve and animation. He wanted some action, and everything in him seemed to quiver with the tremor of raw energy.

He launched a conference in December 1932 at Sirajganj which might have failed its purpose but spread his name far and wide. Moulana loves conferences. It suits his tastes and temperament and earns spotlight for the cause. It is the grandeur, the vast throng of people, the briskness and bustle, some crowd always swirling around him, the centre of attraction-all these please his ego and sense of patriotism. Suddenly section 144 was announced by the local SDO in order to stop the conference. Suhrawardy and Abdul Momin moved upto the Governor to lift the section 144. When all this was splashed in newspapers, the conference and along with it the name of the Moulana earned so much limelight that thepeople from different corners of Bengal began to pour down.

He started the Krishak Proja Party conference as a self-styled organizer with the blessings of Abdul Matin Chowdhury, a former minister of Assam. He decided Suhrawardy should inaugurate and Khan Bahadur Abdul Momen preside the conference. All these happened without the knowledge of Moulana Akram Khan, the

founder of the party. Akram Khan was piqued and boycotted the conference. Moulana projected himself as the organizer and chairman of the reception committee. It was a sight to see Moulana, a vibrant young man sporting a handsome beard with streaks of grey and his lips redden with Pan, Moving about briskly inside the vast concourse of people, his bright face lit up with pride and satisfaction. It was a throng of four to five hundred thousand of people. Only a section settleddown to their seats; the rest began to drift around the Pandal as a heaving mass of humanity. It was more of a fair than a conference with boats loaded with goats, rice and other foodstuff floating down the river and going to the camps for distribution to the different groups of guests.

Moulana had no fund, or personal fortune to spend. But he had the organizing talent and enough disciples who sent all this food as gifts to their Peer Saheb. Moulana's memorable sacrifice lay in Assam. He fought valiantly against the line- system clamped down by the Assamese Govt. That hostile government drew a north to south line across the western region of Assam and asked the refugee from Bengal to come thus far but not farther. The poor landless Muslims of East Bengal, mainly of Dhaka and Mymensingh driven by unemployment and hunger traveled to Assam to seek their fortune. These hardy and desperately poor people cleared the jungles of Assam infested with tigers and elephants and settled down there. But the cruel Assamese Govt. drove them out farther across the line to the west.

Bhashani threw himself into thick of this dispute, showed gusto and vitality and roused their anger and fearlessness. The people pushed across the line and again settled down there – this time with more determination and will. Bhashani inspired them and gave them courage, hope and pride. And the trafficking across the line system continued sporadically till the Sadullah ministry came and enforced the line system with stern and ruthless ferocity.

Moulana Bhashani returned from Assam and was elected a member of East Pakistan Assembly from Tangail as uncontested candidate. That was in 1948.. Soon he began to deliver fiery speeches in the Assembly and let the member feel the impact of his speeches and personality.

BIRTH OF AWAMI LEAGUE AND BHASHANI

Immediately after partition in 1947, the people wondered "what will be the fate of the Muslim League? What will happen to the money lying in different funds?" It was however decided that Muslim League should also be partitioned and the Pakistani part should be called Pakistan Muslim League.

Moulana Akram Khan was made organizer of the new Muslim League in East Bengal and Chowdhury Khaliquzzman the chief of the Pakistan Muslim League. Many were eager to join the Muslim League. Some however thought that Muslim League had outlived its purpose and kept themselves aloof.

It is a new country, a new state and it needs a party with new aims and ideals. Akram Khan however set about the tasks of organization with new zeal and earnestness. He distributed twenty-eight receipt books though his faithful to enlist 1400 members from the Dhaka city. Only 1400 numbers in the city of four hundred thousand.! It dawned on Moulana that he too should be a member of the Muslim League along with others. Meanwhile Ataur Rahman, Salam Khan and a few others went to meet Moulana Akram Khan. When they went to his house, Akram Khan came out and started talking with them in the garden. "Akram Khan is an outsized man, larger than life, a man with a tremendous influence upon the government. When he talks it looks as if he is holding out threats". This is how Ataur Rahman Khan described him in his book, Ozaratir Dui Basar. Akram Khan snorted, "It is no use having a party embracing all lambs and goats. We shall take only those people who believe in our ideals".

The visitors protested and assured "We are willing to abide by all your ideals". Akram Khan asserted "No, mere assurance will not do. We shall have to judge the new men and then take them". The visitors insisted "It is a national organization. Everybody has a right to enter". The Muslim League chief retorted "National! That would not suffice, that might be before partition. Now we need a party that will support the government."

Akram Khan at last relented and asked them to become members

and added, "For want of papers. We could not publish sufficient number of receipt books. We have to manage with those we have." With the visitors there was a gentleman who dealt in paper. When Ataur Rahman pointed towards him and suggested "He is willing to publish the receipt books free of cost", Akram Khan was bogged down. He must have realized they were not letting him off with his excuses. Akram Khan waved his two hands, "No, No, that cannot be done". And immediately he turned to his house. This was all embarrassing. When all this was reported to Bhashani he was furious. He thought Muslim League had become a monolithic organization sponsored by the state and shut out to the general mass.

Moulana Bhashani and Shiekh Mujibur Rahman and others at last called a public meeting at Narayanganj. Many some suggested various ways of tackling the situation. Some thought they should go for a new political party. A few advised: "Why do you break down the mosque? Just change the Imam."

They however decided to go to Karachi and approach Khaliquzzaman, the chief of Pakistan Muslim League and plan the next course of actionl. Ataur Rahman and Begum Anwara Khatun left for Karachi. Ataur Rahman says "I have never been to Karachi before. I landed at the airport and our eyes seem to be blasted by the hot winds of the desert. All round we found arid wastes, trackless desert, no sign of greenery anywhere. The city is 12 miles away.

We checked in to the Baluch Mess. The members of the Constituent Assembly usually stay there". Main Iftikharuddin read in the newspaper about their arrival and came to enquire about them. When they disclosed their plan Mian Iftikharuddin shook his head "you can't do anything". He however took the trouble in arranging the meeting of Ataur Rahman and Anwara Khatun with the Muslim League chief.

The visitors left the mess early in the morning to meet Chowdhury Khaliquzzaman. The latter said apologetically "We cannot do anything. We have to carry out the orders of Quad-e-Azam. We cannot have the organization opened up to everybody.

Besides it is not good for a new state. We have nothing much to struggle for, no agitation to stop or tackle. So, why have a large organization?" He cut short the discussion suggesting "Please see Akram Khan and do as he advises." When they apprised him of their meeting with Akram Khan, Chowdhury added wearily "nothing can be done then."

They returned to Dhaka frustrated and perplexed. They issued a press statement on the result of their journey to Karachi. It was apparent that the authorities are turning the Muslim League as captive of their own interests and whims. Moulana Bhashani was indignant. So were others. Bhashani traveled widely in the country and started gathering mass opinion and wrote to Ataur Rahman to convene a conference. Many Muslim League workers were also invited to the conference. It was decided to hold the conference on 22nd June, 1949 at Dhaka.

The government was perplexed or rather bristled at the aim and purpose of the conference. The government thought that this conference was directed against the government. and against the state. So it must be abominable. The workers proposed that a new party should be launched. The Muslim league sponsored by the government. could not serve the country. It was not only indifferent but it was not even aware of the problems of the country. The Muslim League had become a slothful, aging and purblind organization.

Bhashani asked Ataur Rahman to preside over the conference. Ataur Rahman hesitated and said "I have never been a fullfledged politician. I was an active worker of Krishak Praja in 1935 to 1936. After resigning from the government service in 1944, I was an enthusiastic Muslim League worker only for three years. This is not a high pitched politics by any standard. Secondly, the mood and temper of the government is ugly. The reaction of the chief minister to the opposition is rude and intolerable. It makes one's blood boil. Suhrawardy has been to Pakistan with a peace mission. He has been slighted many times. He has also been threatened with arrest. Who am I before Suhrawardy? Besides if I am detained, my family will just starve".

Just two days before the conference, Moulana called at Ataur Rahman's house at 1 A.M. at night. Moulana told him "If you decline to preside, then I shall renounce everything and return to the village. There my mission will be only to preach Ialam". After two hours of argument, Bhashani stood up to say good bye saying that he would leave Dhaka within a few hours. Ataur Rahman writes in his book "something snapped within me. Suddenly I realized that I was committing a great blunder. I went down to the doorstep and caught caught hold of Moulana and brought him back inside. I said 'I shall do whatever you direct. If you think something can be achieved by sacrificing my life, here is my neck ready". Moulana Bhashani was visibly moved and embraced Ataur Rahman putting his hand around the latter's neck, his tears rolling down the cheeks.

The conference commenced at Golapbagh. There was a great deal of excitement and speech making. It was proposed that a People's (Awami) Muslim League –Awami Muslim League should be set up. They had not yet shaken off the grandeur of the name – Muslim League. As such they could not spurn the name so soon. They thought the people in large numbers would start joining if they find a People's Muslim League.

Moulana Bhashani was elected president. Ataur Rahman and a few others were made Vice-Presidents Shamsul Haque, Secretary, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Khondakar Mushtak Ahmed, Joint Secretaries. In the working committee were elected twenty members. Pir Manki Sharif lunched an Awami league in the frontier province straight away. Mujibur Rahman who brushed against the Government on language issue was in jail at that time.

The glow of enthusiasm and pride that swept over Pakistan began to fade away in less than two years. The people began to despair of the absured and painful events that overtook the country. Everybody seemed to jostle for the high office of ministers. The reaction was immediate. That was terrible and agonizing. Moulana Bhashani, President of the Awami league began to roar across the country with a new message of hope and vision foe better life. He began to hammer on in his speeches "It is the same whether the pig is white of black. To eat it is forbidden in Islam."

In the Sub-Divisions and in Thanas, new branches of the Awami

league began to sprout spontaneously. New hope and spirit began to pulsate in the hearts of the people. They began to know what they should do. In return, the Muslim League government leaders started first wave of arrests throughout the country. In short this is the history of the birth of Awami league. And it appears that Moulana Bhashani was the moving force behind its birth. Toward the end of 1952, Moulana Bhashani and Suhrawardy visited Mymensingh to lay the foundation of the District branch of the Awami League. They could not however hold the meeting. The intolerance and ill will of the Muslim League did not allow it. A meeting was called at the compound lying between the town hall and school board building.

The local Muslim League leaders devised a novel and insidious plan to disturb and break up the meeting. In the Muslim League with the loud speaders poised towards the meeting. Whenever Bhashani and Suhrawardy started speaking the loudspeakers of the Muslim League which outnumbered those of the Awami League, blared out mocking voices denouncing the leaders and drowning their speeches.

I happened to be around there and saw Suhrawardy and Bhashani desperately trying to speak and thwarted by the disturbances. Suhrawardy turned ruddy with anger at the disturbances and by the afternoon sun that hit his faced. I could see Suhrawardy muttering inaudibly; his face struggled to hold his veiled power in restraint. I too saw Moulana speaking effusively and gesticulating but nothing could do heard.

And ultimately they left the meeting in frustrated anger. The local Deputy Commissioner Mollah Abdul Majid and Superintendent of Police, S.M. Mohiuddin who ostensibly decided to intervene if only a riot starts stood on the roof of the town hall and stared down at the meeting in curious amusement.

The leadership to disturb the meeting and humiliate Suhrawardy and Bhashani was taken up by one Monem Khan, the President of Mymensingh School Board and his eldest son Bachhu. It is told Suhrawardy asked someone who that gentleman was. When told he was Monem Khan, Suhrawardy caustically said, "Such a man

has a great future in Pakistan." Suhrawardy was indeed right. In 1962 Monem Khan became the Governor of East Pakistan during Ayub's regime and continued his oppressive rule till he was swept out of power in ignominy by the people's movement in early 1969. And his son Bachhu unhappily died in a plane crash earlier in Cairo.

THE UNITED FRONT AND MOULANA BHASHANI

By 1953 the Muslim League had become a fat, complacent and immobile organization with roots struck off from the people. It had become a symbol of anti- people and of the arrogance and folly of the central government in Karachi. It seemed to be an antithesis of the Bengali language movement and of any native aspiration.

Fazlul Huq resigned from the post of Advocate general in 1953 and soon embarked on a new political party called Krishak Sramik party. Moulana too vowed to defeat the Muslim League and stood ready for the general election. The common platform between Fazlul Huq and Bhashani was natural, spontaneous and sprang from common dedication. When the election came the United Front was found to be nemesis of the Muslim League.

Three heroes of Bengal, Fazlul Huq ,Moulana Bhashani and Shaheed Suhrawardy banded together and traveled around the country rousing the people's sentiments against the misdeeds and designs of the Muslim League. They carried a message of a better and brighter dawn. They promised to liberate the people from ruin and despair. There was glow of new consciousness, new pride and promise sweeping throughout the country. The leaders brought such intensity to the election campaign that the people began to feel a new throb and vitality in their hearts. The voters marched to the polling booths in groups in hundreds and thousands. The result was incredible. The Muslim League was brutally battered. The U.F. emerged with 97.5 percent votes and snapped up all the parliamentary sets except ten. To this glorious tale of the United Front Ataur Rahman added something in his book," Ozaratir Dui Basar", which is not very flattering to Moulana. He claims that Moulana sometime stayed away from the election campaign of 1954 when the U.F. was pitted against the Muslim League. He further

adds that Moulana nominated candidates without authority in one or two places and canvassed for them against the official candidates of the United Front. The candidates of Moulana however never saw the light of success.

The twenty one point manifesto of the United Front invariably carries the stamp of Bhashani's moods and passions and those of his disciples. In fact when forty two point manifesto was originally drafted by Abul Mansur Ahmed, Moulana Bhashani blessed it as final and suggested that it should be the manifesto of the U.F. Later on however it was watered down at the request of Suhrawardy and the Krishak Sramik Party members to lesser number of points.

Suhrawardy was tolerant of some of the twenty one point programmed only for the sake of election but never warmed up to all the passionate and zealous programmes of the East Pakistani leftists. But Moulana Bhashani supported the manifesto with all the fibre of his being. He believed that it was possible to execute all the points, had not the United Front fallen apart so soon.

During this period much emotion and militancy was displayed. In the U. F. Fazlul Huq's legendary reputation for the downtrodden was lent, Suhrawardy was cast as its able organizer and Bhashani would be the director of people's wrath against the Muslim League's tyranny and folly. The immediate consideration was to wrench East Bengal from the grip of the Muslim League. They did not give serious thought to the practicality of the twenty one point manifesto or the antipathy of the Central Government towards it. After the victory in the election, what happened is a melancholy tale of futility and fecklessness of the leaders.

On the first April 1954, an informal meeting of the Awami League M. P. A's was held at the office of Simpson Road. The young Turks among the members suggested that before Fazlul Huq was elected parliamentary leader, he should be asked to select the ministers and allocate the portfolios. They argued Fazlul Huq was too soft and unpredictable and was likely to fall under the grip of the private advisers of dubious repute. They wanted to prevent any effort from his advisers to lead him astray. Suhrawardy just brushed aside their suggestion saying "The people in the country have already elected Fazlul Huq as their leader. The induction of the U.F> ministry should not be delayed. The Governor Khaliquzzaman had

been asking Fazlul Huq to form the ministry as early as possible particularly after the grisly riots in the Chandraghona Paper mill."

Moulana remained neutral and passive. On the 2nd April, Fazlul huq was elected the leader of the parliamentary party unanimously under the Presidentship of Moulana. Suhrawardy congratulated Fazlul Huq. Moulana raised his hands to pray to Allah for the success of the leader. The prayer of Moulana was not however heard by the Almighty.

Soon after, strife ensued between Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy on the selection of ministers. Fazlul Huq's choice fell upon a particular person, whom Suhrawardy regarded unsuitable. A senior Awami league central minister says "What the young Awami league M.P.'s feared, happened" Fazlul Huq appealed to Suhrawardy pleading he was necessary in the cabinet for personal reasons. Suhrawardy could not reconcile. Some say if Moulana Bhashani would have been hard and tried to enforce his will upon either side the misunderstanding could have been nipped in the bud. But Moulana did nothing of the sort. This was the beginning of the erosion of the United Front platform.

BHASHANI AS A POLITICIAN

Moulana is a master of the techniques of politics. There is an interesting sidelight to the character of Moulana. It is rather doubtful in veracity. It is told while proceeding to the venue of a meeting or conference which he does usually by boat he collects information of the price of the different food stuff from the villagers' on the way. After equipped with all the price tags of all the necessary things of life, he attends the meeting. While haranguing the people, he rattles off the prices of the different materials in impressive detail and the audience naturally marvels at his prodigious memory. Nor is it all. He would also quote the prices of the same food stuff prevailing during the British days for comparison. In quoting the prices of the bygone days, he would use more his commonsense and imagination rather than genuine price indices.

Suhrawardy who saw through Moulana's tactics was amused and one day told him jestfully that the prices quoted by Moulana were not correct and steady. Besides his wit and rhetoric, he

possesses shrewdness which few politicians can match. Once at Bajitpur he was addressing a public meeting attended by about ten thousand people. In the crowd, there were about one hundred men with black flags who came for demonstration against Moulana. He told the demonstrators "Why have you come for black flags demonstration? What have I done to you? Why do you not show black flags against the corrupt people, smugglers and other antisocial elements? Why do you not go to the Tahsil office, Ration office and police stations and show black flags there. No sooner did he say that than the people chased the demonstrators who ran for their lives. Moulana more than anybody else has a unique horse sense in capturing and distilling the moods of the people. He knows what is occupying in their minds and says exactly what they feel like hearing. It is the one outstanding quality of leadership which held him in the position of a leader so long.

Next he always tells the audience that he does not care for Prime Ministership of any position. He gives the impression that if he desires he can get any position.. But as he is a selfless worker, he cares little for position and power.

Moulana has got winsome and pleasant manners which attract people of opposite camp to him. Once he was traveling to North Bengal from Dhaka and on the train he was shadowed by three D.I.B men. When he spotted them he at once decided that he would not take his meal unless they joined him, and they did.

Bhashani was never and admirer of Nazimuddin. During his regime as a chief minister, Nazimuddin was hard upon Suhrawardy and also upon the Awami League. For Nazimuddin, an agent of Karachi it was his duty to liquidate the Awami League from the beginning. Yet when Nazimuddin was dismissed unceremoniously by Ghulam Mohammad from his Prime Ministership, the fairness and democratic values in Bhashani revolted. Bhashani heard the news when he was addressing an Awami League meeting at Mymensingh. He immediately lashed at the Governor General Ghulam Mohammad for the undemocratic action.

After the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly a new Constituent Assembly with eighty members was convened by Ghulam

Mohammad. The plan of the Governor General was to divide the seats in equal halves between the two wings. It should be recorded that Fazlul Huq opposed this parity proposal, so did Moulana Bhashani. But Suhrawardy to the surprise and chagrin of the followers began to advocate it. He reasoned " unless this parity proposal was accepted neither Governor General nor West Pakistan would ever agree to the functioning of the new Constituent Assembly and deadlock would continue." But Moulana rejected it. Later after persuasion by Suhrawardy, Moulana accepted it as a temporary device applicable only to the new Constituent Assembly. Abul Mansur says sadly "When we sat at the dinner table of the Governor, West Pakistan at Murree we realized that parity proposal is the permanent claim of West Pakistan."

Moulana Bhashani embarked on a new venture in 1958 to get all his demands met by the Government, or to be more precise to attract the attention of all his country men. He threatened seven days self purification fast. It is a political novelty among the Muslim politicians. It smacked of Gandhian ways. The hunger strike threat end by Moulana was a display of his new kind of political talent. As this device was an old ploy of Gandhi for attaining the political ends of the Congress, it did not create any furor or sympathy. It was ignored by the intelligential as a stale and futile venture of Moulana.

Fasting offended the sensibility of many Muslims. Qumrul Ahsan, a former MNA of Nizame Islam party taunted "Is he to atone for the sins committed by his party both at the centre and in the province in his name? May not the irreverent suspect that the fast is the Moulana's opening move in the campaign for nest years' election."

M. A. H. Ispahani recalls a meting of Bhashani with Jinnah. Ispahani who has steady dislike of genuine leaders of East Bengal like Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy did not spare Bhashani from his criticism. Ispahani says, to Qaid-E-Azam, Moulana was a dislike at first sight. Jinnah who belonged to different world al together could not understand the gregarious an impulsive Bhashani.

Ispahani writes in his book 'Qaid-E-Azam Jinnah as I knew him' "When in 1946 I accompanied him on his tour of Bengal and Assam,

The President of the Assam Provincial Muslim League, the now famous Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani of East Pakistan, called on him at Sylhet. Reporting the activities of he Muslim League in Assam and assuring the Qaid of the fullest support of Muslims in the struggle for Pakistan, he narrated with emotion the sufferings of our brethren in some parts of Assam as a result of Hindu injustice and persecution and their persistent effort to push Muslims out of Assam and Sylhet into East Bengal, weeping bitterly as he spoke. The Maulana's sincerity impressed me and I was so moved that I had to swallow my tears to keep my eyes dry.

The same evening when the rush of visitors had ended and the Qaid was alone in his room, I went in to speak to him before dinner. I referred to the conversation with Bhashani at noon and told him how deeply I was impressed by the sincerity of the Provincial President adding that if we had more active and enthusiastic Presidents like the Moulana in the other Provinces of India men who were willing to suffer and make sacrifice for the cause and not work for personal benefit or aggrandizement, the Muslim League would, indeed, be a stronger and much active political organization.

Jinnah told me that he did not agree with my opinion of the Moulana. He thought that men like him were not fit to be leaders and could not be relied upon to deliver the goods. "Sentimental nonsense and emotion have no place in politics", he said, "Politics, my boy, is a game of chess aod evils connot be cured by tears but only by hard work, courage and determination. The tap of emotionalism is easy to turn on and not so easy to turn off. With emotion, a rational policy might become the first casualty."

"He ended by saying that he did not consider the Moulana fit to be President of a political organization like the Muslim League and the sooner the League freed itself of his leadership and of man of his temperament, the better would it be"

"I made a note of this conversation, not merely because it gave me an insight into the workings of the Qaid-E-Azam's mind but also because it reflected his views on the qualities which a good and sound political leader should possess".

MOULANA FORMS NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (N A P)

When Suhrawardy was the prime minister, the disillusionment of Moulana Bhashani began to burst out to the surface. The rift with Suhrawardy was an agonizing event for the Awami League. Moulana's disenchantment with Suhrawardy began when the latter ignored the autonomy question, the vital plank of twenty one point programme. Suhrawardy is alleged to have said "98 percent of the autonomy has already been achieved." It is on the foreign policy that Moulana's break with Suhrawardy was complete aud final. In the struggle for leadership of the Awami league Moulana had certain advantages over the prime minister. Firstly Moulana was the president of the East Pakistan Awami League. Secondly he was not holking any office and as such kept himself immune from criticism.

Despite Suharawardy's friendship with Chou-en-lai, Chinese Prime Minister, Moulana found that Suhrawardy was tugging the country to American camp breaking his earlier pledge of an independent foreign policy. Moulana Bhashani, a born rebel who thrives on opposition is the last person to share the ignominy of the betrayal of the twentyone point prgramme. Moulana laid special accent on international problems. Until recently no speech of his or his disciples was shorn of any comment of international affairs. This absorption with the international problems made the organization somewhat unreal and elusive.

The purpose of the famous Kagmari conference was understandable. What was not understandable was the manner in which it was held. In order to draw the sympathy of the foreign governments and their leaders to his foreign policy, Bhashani sent out invitations to them and erected gates on roads leading to the venue of the conference in the names of Pandit Nehru, Dr. B. C. Roy, Iskander Mirza, Stalin etc. The excessive zeal to ingratiate the foreign leaders particularly the Indians at the cost of the Pakistani leaders cut him in his reputation and the intellectuals and peasants were both perplexed by the overture of Moulana. From the conference Moulana emerged as an awkwardand confused patriot. On the question of foreign policy Moulana was inflexible and often said "I cannot change my view even if I am to die."

In Kagmari a meeting of the working committee of the Awami League was held. There the differences between Bhashani and Suhrawardy were wide open like a raw wound. The meeting discussed the foreign policy till late night an ultimately it was decided to refer the matter to the parliament. After the approval of his foreign policy in the parliament, Suhrawardy was free to eulogise the virtues of the pacts. In fact he did it too stridently. Moulana was deeply hurt. Then he called the council session of the Awami League and there he thought he would be able to defeat and encompass Suhrawardy. Moulana relied upon the left leaning politics of the younger elements who crowded in the council session. For two days foreign policy was debated and ultimately the votes were cast. Suhrawardy got 800 votes against 35 of Moulana.

To Moulana this was an exercise in disenchantment. He found his defeat final and shatter ring. Ataur Rahman says, "As Moulana this was an exercise in disenchantment. He found his defeat final and shatterring. Ataur Rahman says, "As Moulana had faith in democracy we thought Moulana would accept the verdict of the majority." But Moulana planned a party of his own called National Awami party. He always said earlier "Awami League is my last political party. Whatever I may do I shall not be able to leave the party. The day I leave Awami League I shall retire from politics."

He did not resign from politics but launched a new party with renewed vigour. Some Awami Leaguers who were either expelled of deserted it voluntarily gathered around Moulana. Later, thirty disgruntled MPS, political careerists, genuine patriots and crypto communists joined the National Awami party along with a group of Ganatantri Dal leaders. It was a party born out of ego harassed by rivalry and defeat. The leftists in East Pakistan were left without any leadership. The K. S. P. of Fazlul Huq is a middle class petit brogeois organization which appeared before the peasants only during the election.

The peasant and the industrial labour had no political organization of their own based on class struggle. The famous Kishan movement organized for a long time by comrade Muzaffar Ahmed and his colleagues is dead and gone in East Pakistan. Communist party is banned. There was no organization to fill the

political vacuum. The suffering of East Pakistani peasants and laborers was primarily the result of their lack of organization which can preach and fight for their interest. The peasant and the labour held high hopes when Moulana organized the National Awami party for the betterment of their economic plight. But the hopes were dashed. Moulana lacked organizing ability and depended solely on the strength of his own speeches and statements. The peasants remained where they were. The National Awami party could not touch even the fringe of the vast peasant population. Bereft of dynamic leadership, the peasant and the labour who usually respond to leftist's call, were left unorganized and remained prey to various organizations financed by the industrialists and other vested interests.

Moulana had neither the patience nor the organizing talent to divert the peasants into leftist organization like NAP. Moulana wanted a quick result and to beat down the Awami League as the party of the people. Muslim League thrives on Islam and grievances against India. Awami League lives on autonomy and disparity. National Awami party is cast as a leftist organization with overtone of socialism at home and alliance with the communist countries abroad. It is an avowed enemy of the pacts like pro-US SEATO and CENTO pacts , set up under the patronage of the Americans with the object of rolling back communism. After the recent war with India, the futilities of these pacts have been laid bare. NAP's stand seems to be vindicated by the inner hollowness and spuriousness of the so-called pacts.

Immediately after the Martial Law, Moulana was arrested under the Public Safety Act. The first night he shared with other arrested men like Abul Mansur, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Abdul Khaleque. Moulana spent the whole night talking about the politics and future of Pakistan. It was more of a political get-together. The authority thought it was too much of a comfort. So next day they were taken to different cells to languish alone there, But Moulana devoted his time to vegetable and flower gardens. For years he had fallen from view only to turn up at the meetings occasionally- that also in the countryside. He now gave himself up totally to the agitation through statements and discourses.

By 1963 something happened to Moulana. Earlier in August of the same year, Moulana Bhashani revising his previous stand called on the President Ayub Khan for political discussions. When he found a flutter of protests in the opposition camps he retreated and denied on August 12, 1963 of any intention of meeting the President except on an all-party basis.

Ten days later he was the guest of the President. In December, 1963 Suhrawardy died in Beirut, Lebanon. With his death faded away the last hope of a united opposition. Within a month Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced the revival of Awami league. And Mulana was not to be left far behind. It was followed closely in January, 1964 by Moulana's rejuvenation of the National Awami Party. In the middle of 1964 Moulana now offered "to strengthen the hands of President Ayub provided the President adopted an independent foreign policy for the country" as if foreign policy is the entire problem that matters in our country. His naivety and short sightedness, his critics say is baffling. Bhashani became the unofficial go-between who helped Ayub Khan to better relations with Peking. It was this role, which not only shielded him from arrest but made him a delegate to Peking and Cuba, while others like Sheikh Mujib were being packed off to Jail.

Was the energy and articulateness of Bhashanl dulled by his age? Or as his citics sometimes sugget he had been numbed by Ayub's Martial Law regime. His virtual silence in the last Presidential election of 1965 was enigmatic and some say deliberate to stay away from it all.

With his spread out beard now turning wispy and a round, soiled straw cap on his head he looks more like a village Mullah. But he is far from it. He is in fact a lay priest aiming at a secular goal. What is his contribution?' one may ask His major contribution was in helping the creation of the Awami League, an effective opposition party to guide and balance the ruling power and then gathering all the leflest elements around him under N.A.P. and injecting a threat of revolution, a hew dimension into the politics of the country.

The Martial Law had upset the political posture of Moulana. His taste for mob oratory, his talent of rousing passions and sentiments

of the people were no long use to him. His energy, his oratory and his insight into peasant's character are his political capital. On it he lived and flourished but after 1958 his fair would seemed to evaporate around him. For years he was a deflated man and easily pleased if he was made a leader of a delegation to China and seemed to enjoy the ovation and greetings in a foreign country. Moulana was also sent to Cuba in 1966 as a leader of a government sponsored delegation along with A.T.M. Mustafa. The latter died thereof heart failure.

BHASHANI AND SUHRAWARDY: ----A STUDY

Moulana Bhashani is just an antithesis to Suhrawardy in sense of values an outlook on life. They were however united in the common aim of uprooting the Muslim League; and their newly formed Awami league was dead set against the Muslim League of Nurul Amin. Suhrawardy was the leader of the intellitgentia an urban youths and was ever ready to form the government. Bhashani's image will be cast as man of the masses, and a director of resentment of their penury and hardship against the government.

Their personal character and outlook are diametrically opposite. Whereas Suhrawardy went to the village only occasionally keeping the base of his political campaign ifn the city, Bhashani finds citadel of power in the village and comes only to the city –that also to fling invectives against the men in power.

A born aristocrat, Suhrawardy was always trying to reach the peasants with the message of prosperity whereas Moulana, a born peasant was restlessly trying to reach the middle class with his left swinging politics. Suhrawardy was a democrat – liberal democrat at that and a persistent believer in parliamentary democracy of British brand. Suhrawardy once advised his followers to develop the Awami League on the lines of the Labour Party of Great Britain. Infact he distributed some labour party literature to his followers.

Suhrawardy had a fixed idea how to govern the country. He was no agitator and wasi ntensely a democrat, not only believed in the ends but in the means as well. He was an evolutionary being; you may call him a gradualist. He did not believe in the soul shattering thoughts of revolution. He was too much of and aristocrat and genial

being to plunge into the revolution- an unpredictable and dark flareup of human passion.

Bhashani is an impatient being, started his career as an agitator firstly against oppressive Hindu Zaminders, and then plunged into the Khilafat Movement. His fight against the cruel line system is the highlight of his career. And as a President of the Assam Muslim League, he was a vital outpost of the All India Muslim League and fought for Pakistan in the Sylhet referendum. Later after partition he joined hands with Suhrawardy for parliamentary democracy and separated from him as his mind was churning for drastic solutions through socialism.

As the plight of the people deteriorated, his concept on politics too changed. His ideas swayed and drifted and now it settled on some sort of class struggle. He does not interest himself too much in the election, the conventional mechanism of democracy. His stance is revolutionary and at times is unpredictable. His incendiary rhetoric swings from demand for election to outright seizure of industry and government.

Suhrawardy bred in Calcutta and groomed in Oxford and Inner Temple felt at home in the sophisticated capitals of Europe. Bhashani is a product of raw earth and is at ease in his bamboo walled hut and with the simple Peasants and seems to embody the grit and shrewdness of a village elder. Suhrawardy was brilliant, flamboyant, at times vain and ambitious and had contempt for shabby and ignorant. Bhashani is restless and impulsive, enjoyed the limelight and thrives on spotlighting the perils and problems of the country. Suhrawardy was brilliant but it was sullied by his vanity, and impatient thrust for power. Bhashani is brilliant too but it is submerged by the weight of his unpredictability and impulsiveness. Yet both are dedicated, magnanimous, ebullient and compelling, have élan and vitality and are given to oratorical flourish and are irresistibly magnetic and charming.

Suhrawardy was at his best an organizer. He showed his talent and acumen in organizing a party or platform. But Bhashani is no such organizer and he feels. He has done his duty if he delivers a speech of statement.

Suhrawardy was by birth a rightist; his Chinese leaning carried a political hue to score a point against the Americans and Indians and the past prime ministers. Bhashani is a leftist and is unfailingly a communist sympathizer and can never be won over to the Americans. You can hardly imagine two men so disparate as Suhrawardy and Bhashani. Their prejudices, environment, upbringing and mental processes are markedly different, even antagonistic. Yet they were bound together by brotherhood of love and sacrifice for wellbeing of the people.

ISKANDER MIRZA AND MOULANA BHASHANI

Iskander Mirza knew little of Moulana Bhashani and disliked what he knew. If Mirza had to choose between Suhrawardy and Bhashani, he would of course prefer Suhrawardy. When Moulana and Suhrawardy clashed on the question of security pro-US pacts, Mirza backed Suhrawardy. Moulana Bhashani, despite his look of bigotry was by temperament a radical and was attracted to new ideas. When Mirza was appointed Governor of East Pakistan he came to Dhaka by train from West Pakistan. And on the way he triumphantly declared "I shall shoot Moulana dead," if he wants to enter East Pakistan.

In fact Mirza did not allow Bhashani to enter West Pakistan till Suhrawardy was made Law Minister and prevailed upon Mirza to relent and allow Moulana into East Pakistan.

When Mirza was the Governor of East Pakistan he allowed the extension of the Jinnah Avenue much to the chagrin of Moulana. Mirza often delighted in doing things if he was convinced of the righteousness against the wishes of the politicians for whom he had scant regard. To Iskander Mirza Moulana Bhashani is an ignorant leader of the masses a born agitator against the men in power or a loudmouthed, semiliterate leader of illiterate peasants, dedicated more to projecting himself as hero of the masses rather than to the cause of the masses.

Iskander Mirza could not reconcile himself to the friendship of Suhrawardy with the 'communist' Bhashani. He was looking for an opportunity to snap their political ties. One day the Prime Minister

Suhrawardy told Abul Mansur Ahmed, the Central Commerce Minister, "President Mirza is pressing me to arrest Bhashani immediately." Abul Mansur looked horrified and said, "How can we arrest our President. Bhashani?" Suhrawardy was not too worried and said, "Don't be surprised; if you look into the secret file you may agree with the President." They had an argument and at last the prime minister passed the secret file on Bhashani to Abul Mansur writes in his book, "Fifty years of politics as I saw it", "I read the file with great attention. It took me a few days. After all it is a secret file. And I kept it in an Iron safe. I rtead the file at night so that none can see it. The Prime Minister had gone out on tour and on his return I am sure he will ask about the file. I read every line of it as a lawyer reads his documents. All the sheets are original photostat copies. It includes many letters emanating from the Indian embassy in Pakistan to the Indian government in Dhaka. It was however satisfying to note that the name of Bhashani only occurred in three or four places. Even then it does not involve Bhashani in any incriminating way. I could not understand why this big file is called at all secret file on Bhashani. I began to read again thinking I have missed something against Bhashani. But fortunately nothing appeared against him." On return from tour the Prime Minister Suhrawardy asked Abul Mansur "Have you read the file? What did you get." Abul Mansur replied, "I can not understand the reason why Moulana is to be arrested. Suhrawardy looked surprised and said, "What do you say? Is there nothing against him in such a big file?"

"The prime minister agreed with me and returned the file. We both understood that Mirza was trying to create a rift between the Awami league President and the Prime Minister Suhrawardy," writes Abul Mansur.

MOULANA BHASHANI AND ATAUR RAHMAN

Ataur Rahman supplies a sidelight from his personal experience into the activities of Moulana Bhashani immediately after the formation of the Awami League cabinet headed by him. The hunger and starvation worked for the doom of Abu Hosain Sarker government. So when Ataur Rahman took over, he directed all his

energy to solve the food problem and to prove that he could do better than his predecessor.

Moulana immediately warned "Unless 16 lac maunds of rice can be procured for 16 districts within 16 days, the ministry should resingn. "He later extended the time to 24 days. As Ataur Rahman was straining all his efforts he was at last successful in scaling down the price and Moulana did not bother him any more on this point.

Moulana was however watching the Government of Ataur Rahman from his village with suspicion and occasionally came to Dhaka to scare and gaunt him. After a few days of taking over the ministry Moulana wrote to the chief minister, "The situation in the country is serious. The plight of the peasants is very deplorable. The price of paddy is excessive. No body has purchasing power.
Ataur Rahman wrote back "All this I know. Please advise me how to get out of it. Moulana "Why should I suggest? This is your responsibility-not mine." On Moulana's return to Dhaka the chief minister asked "how can you say it is not your responsibility. It is everybody's responsibility. We must not evade the duty. So long we were in the opposition, our duty ended when we put up our grievances. How so you say you have no responsibility? This is dangerous. It is a sign of irresponsibility. He continued "The man who is aware of the rights as well as the responsibilities is the real man. Any child can ask for the rights but he cannot take the responsibility. You have made so many promises; now tackle it. You cannot leave me behind now like a sacrificial animal."

Moulana said, "Go on doing your work. I am doing my work. You are not to explain my duty. My duty is to arouse the people and to make them conscious. I shall go on doing this. This is my responsibility. You can not direct me to other directions. "He said further with a little pause "I am always opposition minded. You will be loser, if you make me pro government. The people are also opposition minded-in fact against any Government. unless you can give them everything they cannot be satisfied. I want to remain with them. If I side with you I shall lose everything.

A few months later Moulana Bhashani came to Dhaka and told Ataur Rahman privately " Be aware, a conspiracy is being hatched

against you. They are all preparing. They are all whispering against you. You must be cautious'

Ataur Rahman said "Why should I be cautious. I have no means of tackling their conspiracy I can't build or break a conspiracy. I can't build of break a conspiracy. I have come here to work. When I find a clique has been formed against me and is not allowing me to work, I shall depart." "What are you saying? This is a sign of incompetence. This is a defeatist mentality? You must be a little strong. Then everything will disappear" insisted Moulana.

"I can be strong but who will help me? You will run away. In times of difficulty I shall not get you." Moulana comforted him "Don't be upset. You will always get me."

Ataur Rahman says "in fact an opposition was built up against me. I told the secretary Sheikh Mujibar Rahman about it." He assured, "This is all false. Why do you lend your ears to all sorts of rumours? This is your fault.'
Once Moulana Bhashani met the chief minister Ataur Rahman at Dhaka and complained "The rate for the labour in the Test relief is low. It is not fair. I asked the officers to increase the rate but they did not do anything" The chief minister ventured to suggest, "The officers cannot do it. We are to change the rule. We are to change the law as well." Moulana advised, "Then just change it. You have spoken against it so much before you formed the government." Ataur Rahman firmly protested " 'I never spoke like that. I have no doubt criticized the government. But I have never pressed the government to do things which I can not do myself when I come to power." Moulana insisted, "Change the rule now if the need dictates it."

After a few days Ataur Rahman received a letter from Moulana Bhashani. He wrote, "on the receipt of my letter, you must transfer the District Magistrate otherwise I shall resign. No officer of any government has ever insulted me like this." The chief minister phoned the officer and asked about the matter. Ataur Rahman could feel that the officer was very surprised and said "Sir, I don't know any thing, I don't remember how I have insulted him." A few days later Moulana came to Dhaka. Chief Minister enquired about it. Bhashani said, "I sent a telegram. On it the District Magistrate had

written, Moulana does not know the law. My order stands." The chief minister said, "It is possible you don't know the law. Moulana said acidly "You are the custodian of law You people are masters of law. We shall see that in the nest election no such law knowing men get elected."

Split in NAP

Bhashani seemed for a while a spent force. His National Awami Party is one of the feuding opposition parties which does not find common ground with the other parties for a solid and united opposition. Something worse happened for the NAP in 1968. It broke down into two segments. The faction styled as requisitionists called a meeting at Dhaka and lashed out at Moulana.

Mohiudin Ahmed, joint Secretary let loose a bitter tirade against the Moulana. He charged "Moulana has openly concerted with the present regime and had led a government sponsored delegation to China without prior approval of the party. His antiparty activity includes his meeting with the President without our knowledge. The bankruptcy of Moulana's leadership was manifested in NAP's opposition to six-point programmed of the Awami League".

This faction argued that the NAP is not a communist organization, nor did it owe allegiance to Moscow or Peking. The differences were on national issues. Other group, they charged, attached more importance to foreign policy than the burning problems faced by the country.

They insisted that the split in the NAP was not the projection of the ideological clash between Russia and China. They believe their NAP would take the people towards socialism through constitutional means and not by revolution. The new NAP is led by Wali Khan, commonly known as Moscow group, for their ideological orientation towards Russia. Wali Khan bristles when his party is called Moscow group. He says "our party does not belong to any group but we have more sympathy for Chiana for their help to Pakistan."

Now it turns out that Moulana is only a president of a faction of

NAP. Moulana is spiraling down from party to party and ultimately to a faction. Each time he forms a party with all the enthusiasm and fanfare, he finds himself marooned from the mainstream or left behind in his own party with his loyal disciples, whose loyalty to his person is morepronounced than the party itself.

Thus the Awami league was born in thefrustration and futility over the Muslim League for its ideological bankcruptcy and confinements to the vested interests. He fretted and fumed with Suhrawardy over the foreign policy and broke away from the Awami league. Then he brought together all the frustrated elements and floated the NAP with an overtone of socialism. But then the enigmatic activity brought doubts and suspicions among the rank and file, they watched Moulana and waited for years. At last in 1968 they could not wait any longer at the 'anti-party' activities of the Moulana. They tore away into another group, more nationalistic in their approach than the Moulana's faction.

BHASHANI AND PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT IN 1969

At late as October, 1968 President Ayub, it seemed, had unshakable grip over the country. He was a supreme leader and a powerful and durable president. Ayub was impressed by the eulogy of the foreign press and by pro-government news papers at the success of his government. He was naturally pleased with himself. The information Department under Altaf Gowhar had flung down "Decade of Development" so stridently with halftruths that the people were only enraged by the exaggerated and futile publicity.

Ayub did not know it. And he did not care to know it. He strutted about the country like a colossus and by the contrivance of Basic Democracy which he designed in such a way that he could easily bounce back to power again. Ayub could alone decide whether he wanted to come back. Presidency was just for his asking.

But then something snapped in November which none could predict or imagine even a month earlier. The latent resentment against Ayub's regime began to simmer and boil over. The people started to throw aside the shackles of fear and began to surge down

the streets. They suddenly turned desperate to shake the government and sweep the country off the control of Ayub. The myth of stable government began to explode on the streets of Lahore, Karachi, Dhaka and many other places.

Ayub said wryly, "The people are bored with the stability of the government." The explanation is not so simple. Professor Arnold Toynbee is possibly more right when he says "the human being will insist of being treated as a person even if the only way he can secure personal attention is to get himself knocked on the head by a policeman's truncheon."

By December the country was convulsed with new upsurge of the people the like of which the country had never seen. Into this convulsion, strode Moulana Bhashani, the aging leader of the National Awami party with all his devastating fury. He thundered , "If the peasants and laborers are not given power, we shall burn the polling booths' The country looked aghast at the new posture of Moulana-a posture of a diehard communist spurning the election, the mechanism of democracy.

Some began to wonder what Moulana wanted and some others suggested as Moulana had no chance of wining the election, he spurned it. The election may lay bare the spuriousness of his claim as the leader of the peasant and the labour. He also roared, "If the laborers are not given a minimum salary of Rs. 150/= per month we shall occupy the industry."

Unhappily for Moulana the age did not mellow him down. He became all the more aggressive and stood poised to tear down the fabric of the society. He no longer believed in the parliamentary government. He wanted social upheaval. He lost faith in election and democracy and all that it stood for. The country looked disconcerted at the new image of Moulana Bhashani. The industrialist and the commercial class felt terrorized at the new effusion of Moulana. The fragile economy of East Pakistan got such a jolt that it began to shred in to pieces.

The remarkable fact about this movement was that it was spontaneous. No leader, or party or any group had sponsored it or

directed it. It welled up from the bottom and from the middle-in fact from every layer of the society. The inner rage and vehemence of the people against the Ayub regime lay thwarted by the iron clad rule of the government for the last decade. But when it burst open it began to spread across the country with all its ferocity and finality. The riot and rampage began to spread towards the country side and like the lava of the volcano it began to cover more and more areas as the days passed by. The movement loomed uncontrolled and untamed. It was all devouring. The fierceness of the crowd lost its bounds and began to splash across the countryside in all its hideous excesses.

The basic democrats who symbolized the autocracy of Ayub took the brunt of the people's wrath and revenge. Moulana brought such intensity and fright to the movement that when he thundered that political prisioners must be set free. Immediately the government could not hold them in confinement for long.

But then Moulana did not join the Democratic Action Committee, a conglomerate of political parties set out for the restoration of parliamentary democracy nor did he attend the Round Table Conference called by President Ayub.

Meanwhile Bhutto made an alliance with Bhashani but shrank from his extremist and revolutionary stand. To Bhutto, Bhashani must have become by now a political liability. Moulana chose his lone path of destiny and planned to overhaul the society and bring a new social order. He visualized a country where the top might become the bottom, the bottom the top, the meaning of words, the roles and status of the individuals; the semblance of things might be changed out of all recoghition.

In one of the meetings in Dhaka he told the crowd of half a lac people in an incendiary rhetoric. "Oh my children (Babara) why did you come here? Have you come here to see my beard? Go out to the countryside and spread fire. "When the police tried to charge him with sedition and questioned him, Moulana said, "I wanted to spread the fiery zeal in the minds of the people; I am not asking them to burn the countryside." When he visited West Pakistan, his virulence and spite against the parliamentary system began to bewilder and frighten the people.

Unhappily for Moulana, Jamat-e-Islami decided that Moulana is and avowed enemy of Islam. There spread a rumour that some NAP men had burned the Holy Quran. Moulana denied with all the force he could muster. But the rumour stuck. On the walls and buildings began to appear the scrawl, "The first casualty of Bhashani's movement was the Holy Quran."

Moulana did not want go down as a godless man. That will be apolitical hara-kiri. So to get back the image, he resorted to a ploy. In Karachi he began to address the labour ridden areas, "You should not care for the Industrialist. The capitalists may have the guns and rifles from the govt. of Ayub. "then showing the Holy Quran he would say, "But you and I have Holy Quran. We are stronger."
On his way to Karachi in Tezgam he was assaulted by some youngmen in the train. The people decried the new trend in politics –physical attack upon the leaders. On behalf of the government A R. Khan, the Defence Minister issued a statement crying down the attack upon Moulana. But Moulana's tongue remained untamed and began to berate the vested interests with vehemence and vigour.

Sheikh Mujib who was alarmed at the new aggressive posture of Moulana noted sadly at the Dhaka Airport on his way back from the Round Table Conference, "When I went to the RTC. I also told him if we were not satisfied we could come not. I feel the inconsistent way in which Moulana is talking. He should retire from politics. He is 86." When Moulana heard Sheikh Mujib's comment it is told he said "Mujib does not know me. He does not know what I can still do".

People wondered why Moulana took such violent stance. The weekly Time magazine called him a prophet of violence "operating apparently on Chinese order to start a Maoist revolt"

The detractors of Moulana believed that he was an agent of President Ayub and he was trying to spread disorder and distresses in the countryside order justify the imposition of Martial Law. An American paper noted that "As much as anyone Bhashani inspired riots that last month forced President Ayub Khan to step down from the Presidency. Now Bhashani is the most severe single threat to fragile peace to the troubled and geographically divided land by the imposition of the martial law.

Out of this movement Moulana Bhashani Bhashani has emerged

with a new profile. It is the profile of a revolutionary. He seems to symbolize the pent up feelings of resentment and anger of the people against the privileged class. The resentment was bursting out at the seams and seemed to overwhelm the country. Will he be able to control their passions and wrath and direct them to a just society free from exploitation, or will he lead them to an austere and soulless society of communism, or will he land the country into endless period of chaos and strife? None can tell. Meanwhile the country hang in fear of the unknowable destiny that lays before it.

MOULANA AND HIS VIEWS –A STUDY

Moulana Bhashani wants to skim the best of both –Marx and Islam. He does not find contradiction and says they meet in social justice; the basic erred of both the ideals. His synthesis is the off repeated brand of Islamic socialism. He was not however the first to think of this kind of mix. Many in Pakistan earlier thought of combining Islam with socialism. Soekarno of Indonesia too developed his beloved political philosophy combining Nationalism, religion and communism which he called 'Nasakom'. When he found communism too hot for his people he later amended his ism into 'Nassasos' for socialism in place of communism. Karl Marx never heard of Islamic socialism but he of course heard of Christian socialism. Karl Marx mocked at the Christian socialism and wrote in the communist manifesto "Christian socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the heart burnings of the aristocrat."

Moulana is however no Marxist. He is far from Marxism. Marx stood for science against religion, for industrialization against the "idiocy of rural life," for the nationalism against the old political order. Moulana does not believe in any of these. To Moulana it must be shocking to hear that Marx thought rural life as idiotic. Moulana however goes on talking of Islamic socialism. He also talked of burning polling booths.

He harangues the red cap wearing militant Moulvi, grandly and romantically dreams of following the Mao's Long March. And lately he is threatening to start an Islamic cultural revolution. He is a

fascinating mixture of sincerity and absurdity. He is at once a kindly and a violent soul. He is a fanatic. But he is an extraordinary product of nature-a fanatic for a noble cause. He brings moral outrage to the problems. He is a courageous attacker of evils, likes to be a problem solver and a way pointer.

His one asset is age. Another he does not care for power for himself. So he need not care for moderation. He is a political animal, climbed his way up through agitations. If he is against the poverty and helplessness, he is also against the distracting things that material riches bring-the snobbery, status seeking, self-importance-everything that tends to repress the natural piety of men.

When he was in the Awami League, he was a social democrat and participated in the election. But his N. A.P. which he devised late was a constant worry in the parliamentary feud and was an unpredictable factor in the making and unmaking of a government.mainly on the question of foreign policy, and he left the Awami League. He wanted to follow an independent foreign policy and for that he wanted to snap ties with the western powers. His independent foreign policy of course means alliance with the communist countries.

After his release from the Awami League he has become more true to himself. He is free now except when he is not controlled by his own mood and intuition. He is not much impressed by the country's return to democracy. Democracy that he saw before 1958 does not exhilarate him. The people are left where they were. One decade of democracy and another decade of Ayub's dictatorship did not mean any happiness to them. Only predictability of Moulana is his unpredictability. Lately he has started talking about Allah and Islam with all his exuberance. His view on Islam in the recent. television interview is possibly the result of his chagrin at the charge by Jamat-E-Islami that he is a heretic and a communist. His latest stand is that he is a Muslim and nothing more has created confusion and bewilderment among his genuine leftist followers. After all communal approach to politics and leftist ideas do not go together.

His detractors say Islam is his fragile façade. Prick him and you find him a genuine communist out to grab power. Moulana is a bundle of paradoxes. In one breath he says "Pakistan is a corner

stone of Pan Islam, not a mere territorial of linguistic entity wedded to a foreign ideology". He then says 'Social evils can not be eradicated so long as the system of private ownership prevails in the country"; overlooking the fact that Islam accepts private property.

Moulana again says "Pakistan should have an independent foreign policy. It should not be influenced by the United States, the Soviet Union or China. But the tragedy is that we are running to these countries for the solution of our problems, although as Muslims, we must subject ourselves to Allah's commandments." It is baffling to hear all these from Moulana. He is the first in Pakistan to run to Peking for his leftist ideas. Moulana is a concrete person and there is no mysticism or haziness about him. Yet he can be abstract and vague when he says "All property immovable of movable belongs to Allah". With all his wisdom and loathing of imperialism, Moulana can also be expansionist. He says "the map of Pakistan without the inclusion of Assam state would remain incomplete."

He approves the 11 points of the students but disapproves the 6 points of the Awami League though the eleven points are the sum of six points and something more. He says further "Lahore resolution should be the basis of Pakistan's constitution." But the six-point is only a watered down version of the Lahore resolution. That resolution is more radical and revolutionary than the six-point programme.

Moulana has known many turns and twists in his career. He started as and agitator and then became a liberal democrat and ultimately moved in jolts towards revolutionary stripe. The apparent turns and twists, in his view, are the winding paths by which one ascends to the summit of success. To him religion is no static concept. It is dynamic and embraces the basic ingredient of social justice. Any system which brings social justice to the people can not be far behind Islam.

He is reveler of violence of which he is innocent. He would ask his followers. "How many houses have you burnt?" But he is the most unlikely person to burn even a straw heap. He likes to shock people. He delights in it. He wants to shock them to rise up from years of sloth and slumber.

He defines and creates himself in action. He learns almost everything from experience. He has the capacity to trust himself and become authentic. Now he stands unabashed with the image of a revolutionary, holding back the unplug weapon of revolution in his hand. Mostly he is indecisive and unpredictable. He swings back and forth between revolution and constitutionalism. The gaze of the country is fixed upon him and on the next course of action he may take.

Recently however, he decided to participate in the election. The NAP is virtually riven by party men of three shades of opinion from the hardheaded communists to the democrats with the left leaning politicians. It appears that the democrats have won the field. Bhashani is too shrewd a politician to abjure election and be left on the side lines of the politics of the country. He says "The NAP does not want to contest in the election to capture power but to voice the grievances of the people." It will surprise none if he overturns this decision again and takes to his earlier stand "food before polls".

His socialist conviction emerges from his resentment against the rich, the disgrace of poverty and the sorrow of the peasants. It is a synthesis of his experience and his sensitivity not learned from the abstractions and theories of socialism. His understanding of the socialism only relates to the practical and fundamental aspect of socialism. He understands only what is necessary and does not bother beyond that. His apparent paradoxes and indiscipline of thoughts are the results of his experience with various sections of people..

Moulana's special intellectual virtue if any has always been more analytical and perceptive than creative. His mind excels at structuring, organizing and articulation ideas rather than generating them. His main strength is a sturdy commonsense, experience and insight into peasant's character Balance, consistency, Judiciousness and thoroughness are not what he strives for. He is sympathetic to earnestness, sincerity and radical views of any variety. He is less dogmatic than dogged in temperament.

The supporters of Bhashani say that Moulana starts where Sheikh Mujib stops. The passion of the Awami League is to stop the exploitation of the people by the vested interests of West Pakistan. But the NAP, they say, goes one step further. It brings into explosive

focus the schism between the haves and have-nots across the inter wing boundaries of Pakistan and asks for new social order. They dismiss the capitalists as one class of people, be he an East Pakistani or West Pakistani and they are united by the bond of ruthlessness, greed and their readiness to suck the wealth and honour of the people.

The recent declaration of the Awami League to establish a socialist state in Pakistan takes the wind out of the sail of Moulana Bhashani. One Awami League sympathies told if Sheikh Mujib's message of Six Points is not heeded by West Pakistan the country will sway and lurch recklessly and dangerously and may fall in to the hands of the Moulana and his friends..

What will be his place in history? His life is hinged on a theme. That theme is the cause of the people. In that cause there is nothing he would not care or endure. He will remain a genuine leader of the peasants – the silent millions, a spokesman of their sorrow and helplessness. He roused their passions and hate against the men in authority who invariably fell below his expectation. He exposed to the knowledge of the people the problems and perils of the nation. He has given the peasants what they had before them a vision of a brighter and better destiny. He has made the people to believe that they are just honest, simple and hardworking people led to economic ruin by the pettiness and tyranny of the government. The people also believe that Moulana cares and does nothing for self but only for the people and their wellbeing.

Says he "What have I to fear. I would welcome being hanged for my people." Moulana is no doubt a restless and dedicated spirit ready to sweep away all the hardship and poverty in the villages. His sincerity is unquestionable, his energy prodigious and his tongue prolific and powerful. That he might have failed in his life's mission as a leftist leader shall be forgotten at the distance of time.

Yet for all his inadequacies in giving his best in leadership, he remains a remarkable man, an outstanding man, a patriot and a leader whom the next generation will remember and revere. He passed away in 1976 at the ripe of 96..

BOGRA MOHAMMAD ALI
(1909-1963)

Stocky and broad shouldered, Mohammad Ali was a man with a lot of bounce and vitality. Here was a restless engaging man. The prankishness of Mohammad Ali, his love for the pleasure as well as of power, his warmth and buoyancy and his second marriage with his secretary made him a remarkable man in Pakistan politics.

But such and interpretation would express only a fraction of the truth about this extraordinary man. He loved fun; also he loved his country and his career. He had been called a play boy. But Mohammad Ali had been a great deal more than a play boy. He had been a prime minister and foreign minister of a country with the population of more than a hundred million. The ebullient prime minister had tried to introduce an element of unconventional breeziness of American variety in the administration- a type of breeziness which refreshed the administration for a while after the slothful reign of Nazimuddin

A well meaning and lovable man Mohammad Ali was at his best as an ambassador. Some say he should have stayed there. But the turn and twist in Pakistan politics did not allow him that way. Look at the variegated political career of this man. He had started his career as a parliamentary secretary then a finance minister in undivided Bengal before he was 32 and after partition worked for several years as a successful Ambassador in Burma, Canada and USA and suddenly landed as a Prime Minister. After his fall he again started full cycle of his career as an Ambassador and ended up as the leader of the House and Foreign Minister before he died in 1963.

Bogra Mohammad Ali had and attractive and pleasant face though by no means handsome. A little burly for his ordinary height, he had a large head with sparse hair, almost balding. A large nose was wedged between his two floating bright eyes underneath an undistinguished forehead. The cheeks curved down to thick lips –

slightly Negroid and sensuous.

There is a strange symmetry about the private lives of his father and grandfather and himself. All three of them married twice, the first one a Pakistani and the second one invariably a foreigner. His grandfather married a Jewish, his father English and he a Canadian.

Mohammad Ali became Prime Minister without even trying. He was swept to this office by unpredictable turn in Pakistan politics. As a Prime Minister he was a pathetic stooge to Governor General Ghulam Muhammad. His chief achievement at this period was his very survival as the Prime Minister.

He began to sink and sink to please Ghulam Muhammad in order to stay in power. Though privately he wept, he put up an appearance of stability and dignity of his cabinet. At the biding of Ghulam Muhammad he helped to fan the flame of rivalry between Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy. He called the former a self confessed traitor and later stuck to him for survival of his political life and to keep out Suhrawardy.

His light hearted claim before a rally at Chittagong that he had forgotten Bengali and he might be allowed to speak in English created a furor and made himself a subject of ridicule. His marriage with his social secretary Aliya brought frown to the conservative circles and embarrassment to the government. He was a man of sophisticated habits and polygamous domestic life. Polygamous as he was he cast his lot with the Mullahs and the bill was pursued in the National Assembly to abolish the Family Ordinance against the growl of the APWA .It was not adopted..

EARLY CAREER

He was born with silver spoon in his mouth. But it appeared his silver spoon seemed to disappear once his father Nawabzada Altaf Ali, a Zamindar of Bogra dissipated his wealth in all he petty vices – particularly in races. Nawabzada had a private aeroplane of his own and married an Englishwoman later. In the court of law, however, his second marriage could not be established and his children were disinherited. This is the father of Bogra Mohammad Ali, a child of

the first marriage. When Mohammad Ali grew up he had the glamour of wealth except the wealth itself. When he was a student in Calcutta he was almost pauper for a while but he had all the liabilities of an expensive taste. He was helped through in the college life by his grandfather Syed Nawab Ali Choudhury and the friends of his father including Suhrawardy himself. However, a Waqf property was discovered with Bogra as the Mutawalli which saved the honour and status of this man.

During his student life in Islamia College he had been secretary of All Bengal Muslim Students Federation when Wasek was the President and sometime of All India Muslim Students Federation. From student days he had shown taste for politics. That was good, his well wishers thought, because the children of Zamindars in those showed interest either in politics or profanity.

After graduation from Calcutta in 1940 he returned to his native town of Bogra, where in the same year he was elected as the chairman of the District Board, the youngest ever chairman and the president of the District Muslim League.

Fazlul Huq, the then chief minister on behalf of the Krishak Proja party could not bear having a Muslim League chairman of the District Board. After a subtle maneuver Fazlul Huq, replaced Mohammad Ali after one year by his father Altaf Ali. In 1942 we found Mohammad Ali as the Parliamentary Secretary under Nazimuddin's cabinet. He had already established his reputation for his amiable manners and as a man about politics and a man of the future.

Suhrawardy liked him. He had been a political child of Suhrawardy. He sat as it were at the feet of Suhrawardy and fed upon his political wisdom. He woked under Suhrawardy as his Finance Minister in undivided Bengal.. When Suhrawardy left Bengal for any period Mohammad Ali was made acting chief minister. That offended senior members of the cabinet – about couple of months before partition he had thundered that Calcutta should not be allowed to cede to India as it had been developed by the hinterland – now to be a part of Pakistan. His demand was taken seriously by the British. They were even contemplating to make it an

international city till the separate capitals are chosen for East and West Bengal. When Nazimuddin replaced Suhrawardy and came to Dhaka as the chief Minister of the new province of East Bengal his allegiance and assurance of complete loyalty to the new leader Nazimuddin. But the latter remained unconvinced and Bogra was left without a job. Bogra was desperately trying to be a member of Nazimuddin cabinet. But he failed to impress Nazimuddin.

Meanwhile Bengali language became a live issue in politics and committee of action sponsored by Tamuddin Majlis threatened strikes to make Bengali as a state language. In fact the country was convulsed by student strikes and demonstration on 11 March 1948. Nazimuddin was upset. Jinnah was having his first visit to Dhaka within a few days and Nazimuddin was too weak and indecisive to stop the strike. He asked Bogra to do something about it. Bogra found that only sensible course was to agree to the demands of the Action Committee if the strike was to be averted and advised Nazimuddin accordingly. Nazimuddin accepted the demands of the action committee to stop the strike so that the visit of Jinnah on the 19th March was not marred by any ugly incident.

Jinnah did not like the agreement of the language issue and opined it had been made under duress. When some of the rivals of Bogra like Dr. Malik and Taffazzal Ali reported to Jinnah that the agreement had been engineered by the initiative of Mohammad Ali, Jinnah was not at all happy. Bogra was hoping for a ministerial post under Nazimuddin but Jinnah decided other wise. He sent Bogra to Rangoon as an Ambassador. Bogra wept.

Burma was not what it is today. Except the city of Rangoon, Burma was swarming with Karens, Kachins and Shans insurgents for autonomy. Even in the city of Rangoon, it was unsafe to walk in the street at night without police protection. One day when Bogra was going to a dinner at 7.30 P.M. his car was stopped and the flag torn by the rebels. When they had a close look at the flag and found it to be a Pakistani one Bogra was allowed to move. After this incident he reported to the foreign office that "my life was in danger." After about nine months Mohammad Ali was posted to Canada.. Now he was pleased with himself as a High Commissioner

of a major English speaking country which holds Pakistan in great esteem.

MARRIAGE WITH ALIYA

Here is the beginning of the Aliya episode which later in life marred his private life and reputation. As it was a case of human interest and a problem which haunted him till his death, it needs a little elaborate treatment. Bogra had no doubt great social gifts of rather amorous gifts so much so that some people called him a play boy. He was not really a play boy. Politics and power were his first love. Bogra did not drink. Even as a diplomat, he never drank – that was a paragon of abstinence almost self-denial. His social gift that he applied occasionally was his trump card. He used it for his diplomatic success. But he was soon trapped by his own gifts. Bogra did not belong to the international set. He was no Prince Aly Khan. He was far from him.

Pakistan with its rigid social mores is not the proper ground to breed social mores is not the proper ground to breed social frivolity. Once in western country he found no bar to his social freedom. His friendship with social secretary with the knowledge of his wife was not always an exhilarating experience for Mohammad Ali. Hamida, his first wife and a first cousin is a gracious lady of simple habits. She is one of those contented wives who take husband for granted, withholds her best from him and later suffers from remorse. But it is often too late. Hamida did not speak English well. So the High commissioner Mohammad Ali advertised for a social secretary. In the interview Aliya was selected by the First Secretary. She is a decent and talented girl and knows six languages. Besides she was shapely and charming. Aliya's social charm and innocent beauty was too much for the fun loving Mohammad Ali. He applied his full charm and sweetness upon this beauty. So it was natural that a mutual feeling of fondness came to them easily and unconsciously.

But Hamida loved Aliya more. So when they were transferred to Washington Hamida could not forget Aliya and tried to persuade Bogra to take her along. Bogra immediately agreed. Hamida by now did not really need a social secretary. She had already learned

English and western etiquette. Hamida never perceived that fondness was growing between Aliya and her husband under her very nose. If ever and doubt crept into her mind she brushed aside as mere misunderstanding. She reproached herself for her own meanness and jealousy. When Bogra was appointed as the Prime Minister Aliya resigned her job of social secretary. But Hamida already too fond of her could not bear leaving her behind and brought her along to Karachi.

For Hamida it was another mistake-a grievous mistake at that. And it was too late. The love affair began to simmer on the surface with all its pulsating fervour. Aliya became all important and absorbing to him. He drew his happiness from her smile and he presence. It opened to Hamida with all the horror of an innocent wife let down by her dearly trusted husband and that woman. Out of rage and humiliation she then left Karachi and lived for months together in Dhaka and vowed that she would never return to Mohammad Ali unless Aliya was driven out of Pakistan. In those days her friends found Hamida looking pale, morose and withdrawn. Her absence from Karachi gave Mohammad Ali and unfettered opportunity to fall deeper and deeper in love with Aliya.

Meanwhile, the rumour about this love affair began to seep through from the curtained house of the prime minister. The wife of another former Prime Minister possibly to take political advantage out of this affair thundered as a leader of APWA, "If a prime minister does not give honour to his wife. How can we expect common men to behave with their wives properly?"

Bogra was upset. After all he did not want to be called an immoral man. So Bogra and Aliya flew together to Beirut and got married there. And his wife Hamida brooded in Dhaka with jealousy and rancor. It is told Bogra once confided to his friend earlier as a justification for his marriage. "Hamida is too good for a man like me."

It is curious to note that our countrymen, however conservative they are, are tolerant of moral indiscretion of our politicians. In the West and moral irregularity would at least impair his political life. Look at Rockefeller. His second marriage with Happy had posed a major barrier to his nomination as a presidential candidate. Britain's

Profuma's intimacy with Christine Keeler has once for all snuffed him out of political career. But our people in such circumstances would only say with a shrug "Oh that is his private life; we are not concerned with it." Elsewhere the advertisement of the frivolity of Bogra would have earned his political extinction. Prime Minister's polygamy has created amusement in international capitals. It brought uneasiness to the U.S. State Deptt. When he was again appointed as an Ambassador in Washington in 1955, Pakistan looked awkward and abashed. Bogra reminded the world afresh that in Pakistan polygamy is still going strong.

MOHAMMAD ALI BECOMES PRIME MINISTER

The strange and ominous news about the development in Pakistan began to filter and spread to the Pakistan embassy in Washington. Bogra was called to come to Karachi by the Governor General. He consulted his wife and well wishers in Washington and on some pretexts he decided to stay on in Washington. Ghulam Mohammad then summoned him to Karachi by sending an urgent telegram for consultation on the food crisis. Bogra left for Karachi assuring his wife that he was coming back soon. Bogra really wanted to come back as it appears, since he did not carry his favorite camera, and other personal things that he always carried with him.

He came to Karachi on the 6th April 1953 and smelled conspiracy to dismiss Nazimuddin. When he told Nazimuddin about it, the latter did not believe it and said "oh no!

After the ceremonious dismissal of Nazimuddin, Ghulam Mohammad emerged as a little Caesar in Pakistan politics and his hand was not retrained by now by the fetters of democracy. To him democracy in Pakistan was an alien idea, an exasperating nonsense. Now he was to look around in Pakistan and abroad for a Prime Minister according to his taste. The ungracious and sudden dismissal stirred distaste in the politically conscious East Bengal. He wanted a pliable man preferably conscious Bengali.---a man who does not carry the stigma of recent politics. Bogra was just the man, an innocent man from abroad cut off from the politics for the last 5

years. And his choice fell upon Mohammad. Ali. To him it was a windfall. But when the offer of Prime Ministership was made Bogra was terrified of the awesome responsibility and was reluctant to accept it. Gurmany and Mirza coaxed him to abide by the wishes of the Governor General. Ghulam Mohammed unfolded before Bogra Mohammad Ali gloomy picture of Pakistan and said "you are the only person who can bring about unity between the two wings and put Pakistan on road to prosperity."

He was thus thrown up at the top by the vagaries of Pakistan politics. For a while Bogra Mohammad Ali provided a political puppet show. Ghulam Mohammad neither consulted the Muslim League nor its Parliamentary party for his acceptability. But Mohammad Ali Began to strut about like a Prime Minister under the protective shadow of the Governor General. At times the chilly reminder of the fate of Nazimuddin offended his sense of bliss. The whole affair seemed to add unreal and surrealistic quality to the whole political drama.

Nazimuddin, however, lingered on as the President of the Muslim League for a while. But later in 1953 the new Prime minister became the President of the Muslim League. He was, however, opposed by Quazi Mohammad Isa on the contention that 'The League President ought not to be a member of the government."

Bogra was happy being the Prime Minister and he was not keen to be the Presiden of the Muslim League Party. Bogra raised no objection when it was suggested by 1954 October that Miss Jinnah should be the President of the Muslim League. That, however, did not materialize.

Any way Mohammad Ali set about the task of making a constitution, the primary duty of a Prime Minister. The controversy on representation and Language stood on the way. The Dawn October 6, 1953 reported how the Prime Minister interrupted a meeting of the parliamentary party to call a press conference. Beaming with joy-his face flushed, Mohammad Ali said, "I am very glad to say that all the decisions have been arrived at unanimously without any opposition from single member of the party. I am now

in a position to announce to my countrymen that the deadlock which had so long held up the progress of constitution making has been broken."

The Prime Minister went on to discus the outline of the Mohammad Ali formula governing the distribution of seats. When later it was laid before the House with pride he said, "The house will be pleased to learn that the formula has been unanimously accepted by my colleagues, and the Chief Ministers of East Bengal, Punjab, Sind, NWF and Bhawalpur and all members of the Muslim League parliamentary party. This unanimity of opinion is itself a remarkable feature. It serves to underline the basic unity and cohesion of the country-an unity which transcends all provincial boundaries".

The Mohammad Ali formula was designed to strengthen the negative power of each wing,. East Bengal was given a majority in the Lower House but a minority in Upper. Parity was to be maintained when two Houses were added together in joint session.

This would mean that any proposal which was solidly opposed by either wing could be defeated in one house. In case of disagreement between the Houses and for major decisions such as votes of confidence or the election of a President, the issue was to be decided at a joint session. But in such instances the motion would require the support of at least 30 percent of the members present and voting from each of the wings.

Shifting political forces hindered the progress of the constitution. Meanwhile the units of West Pakistan had been consolidated into a single province. This unification undercut the base of the Mohammad Ali formula. Like all constitutional devices which try to conceal cleavages by evasiveness, this one also pleased none.

MOHAMMAD ALI AS A POLITICIAN

As a Prime Minister Mohammad Ali immediately proved himself a different man from the outgoing Prime Minister. Nazimuddin was a slowmoving, effete and ineffective Prime Minister. Mohammad Ali wanted to hold himself farthest removed from Nazimuddin. He set about the task both in the office and outside as a Prime Minister with an air of American breeziness and

efficiency. That however, could not make much dent into the national problems. He tried to introduce a brash new vitality and folksiness in his way of life. To endear himself to the people he brought backslapping informality and courtesy. The story has it that while he was a Prime Minister he was on his way to Lahore by train. He went to the engine room, took the seat of the driver and the latter's cap on his head and tried to drive the engine. On another occasion while he was going to the beach in a car with his wife Aliva in bathing costume but covered by an extra cloth, he found a car stranded with some men surrounding it. He took the man in the car dropped him to his destination and resumed his journey to he beach.

While the Prime Minister was busy with the problems of the constitution, a new twist was in the making. The election in East Pakistan which was delayed for a year had at last taken place.

What happened was most stunning. The Muslim League which almost symbolized the State of Pakistan itself was swept out by the United Front, a motley group of political parties under the joint leadership of three heroes of east Pakistan-Fazlul Huq, Suhrawardy and Bhashani.

The election result knocked the bottom out of Mohammad. Ali's Muslim League platform. He began to grope aimlessly for a political foothold. Fazlul Huq provided the opportunity. His injudicious comments in Calcutta and labour riots in Narayanganj gave Karachi a handle to toss out his government and impose section 92A. Further, the rift between Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy offered all the opportunity Mohammad Ali was looking for. Bogra the ever ready stooge of Ghulam Mohammad was asked to sort out the emerging political picture of East Pakistan and turn the result to the benefit of the central government in Karachi.

Bogra wrote a sweet and enticing letter to Fazlul Huq eulogizing him as the only great leader of Bengal. This flattered old Fazlul Huq.

Then continued furtive renewal of fraternity between Fazlul Huq and Mohammad Ali Bogra who found it convenient to fraternize with this old leader rather than Suhrawardy who wanted to take his place after throwing Mohammad Ali Bogra out.

The survival of the Muslim League only thrived upon the clashes between Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy. At the biding of Ghulam Mohammad, Bogra sank to a new low and fanned the flame of misunderstanding between thee two and leaders of East Pakistan. He put the Krishak Sramik Party and the Awami League on the rage to curry favour with Ghulam Mohammad and himself by dangling a hope that either one could from the government without the other, once the section 92A was lifted.

Meanwhile, in order to prolong the central rule Bogra began to say, "The government could not rush to a decision regarding the restoration of parliamentary government in East Pakistan." He continued, "These would have to wait till the implication of the Federal court judgment was clear" This was an excuse pure and simple. After the imposition of central rule under section 92A, Bogra came to Dhaka to explore the possibility of restoring parliamentary government of more precisely to know for himself how far his divide and rule policy is progressing During this visit he told Ataur Rahman, "Your claim as a leader of the Awami league to form the cabinet can not be ignored. But the government thought you are a communist."

Ataur Rahman was startled and asked, "What do you say?"

"Yes, did you not go to Peking in 1952? Was it not a Peace conference? That was an international conspiracy of the communist countries of the world. Still you want to claim that you are not a communist", said Mohammad Ali Bogra and then gave out a hearty laugh. Ataur Rahman cast his head down and said, "Let me think over." He then said to himself, "Let me look inwardly at my own soul and see whether I am a communist." Finding him silent Bogra asked others present, "I have spoken out something abruptly. Please do not speak to anybody else outside this wall". Every body then chimed in, "Of course, of course." Ataur Rahman assured "They would not speak to anybody. But you have brought a serious allegation against me. It is most defamatory. It needs thorough discussion."

"Let us talk it over, now and here."

"No, it is not possible here. I am to sit with you alone."

"Will you come to me at about 5 pm?"

Ataur Rahman went to Bogra and found him sitting alone with

all the arrangements for tea.

Ataur Rahman spoke waspishly for sometime defending himself that he was a Muslim and not a communist. Bogra turned grim as he heard and then queried, "You have made a long speech. But why do you hobnob with the communists and why did you go to that Peace conference?"

"I hobnob with every body else. I do not mind even hobnobbing with you." Ataur Rahman continued, "The world has turned into a hell. The ill will and rancor has sundered the entire world. The world needs peace. If it can be brought about by the communists, why not welcome it?

"No, we do not want it. Can they bring peace? They have spread hostility and ill will around the world," replied Bogra. After a lot of argument, it dawned upon Bogra that Ataur Rahman was not a communist after all. Ataur Rahman asked, "Please tell me now. What do you want to do here?" "Please allow me to think over and see want I can do here," said Bogra.

Bogra Mohammad Ali went to Karachi and met Suhrawardy there. Bogra assured him that he was his disciple and whatever Suhrawardy said was binding upon him. Suhrawardy blessed him and pleaded to permit the Awami league to form the government in East Pakistan. Bogra agreed. After a few days, Bogra came to Dhaka and held a parley with the K.S.P. leaders very secretly. Suddenly one day radio announced that Abu Hossain Sarkar would form the government. Fazlul Huq was told that he had been kept reserved for some higher assignment.

Karachi was very happy that Suhrawardy and Awami League had been left out. There was a strange hobnobbing between Mohammad Ali and the 'self confessed traitor' Fazlul Huq to form government in East Pakistan and to keep out Suhrawardy from power.

Bogra after working as an Ambassador for years decided he must make his foreign policy a success. First, he turned his mind to India. He believed that you could disarm your enemy by politeness and subtle flattery. So in state of exuberance he called Nehru an elder brother. But the elder brother did not react the way Bogra expected him to do. The more Bogra coaxed and cajoled Nehru, more patronizing and self important the Hindu Brahmin became.

But alas, the problems between two nations remained unresolved. And the prestige of Pakistan sank further.

It should be however said in fairness that Nehru accompanied by his sister Mrs. Pandit visited Karachi during this period to continue discussion with Bogra to resolve all the outstanding problems. It was however an exercise in disenchantment for Bogra.

With America the relationship was already good. His partnership with Ghulam Mohammad both aggressively pro American worked better. It was the question of enlightened self interest that spurred them to look for America. Pakistan needs a rich friend with bulging purse and fat granary. There is an element of pragmatism in this foreign policy.

For Bogra it was more than that. He liked America. He lived there for many years. He was emotionally attached to it. He had driven across America and had seen many good average Americans in their homes He even wanted to introduce American rule of the road the right hand driving. But it is told that the conservative circles and camel and bullock carts defeated his intention.

Dulles, a tough and effective American Secretary of State followed a series of security pacts against Moscow. In 1954 Pakistan signed a mutual Defence pact with USA, another agreement with Turkey and yet another with South East Asia-- SEATO. The next year found Pakistan entering into Baghdad Pact.

At the initiative of Indonesian Soekarno, a conference was held in Bundung in 1954 with the avowed purpose of assessing the strength of third force- the Asian personality in the power blocks of the world. Here Nehru wanted to made best use of his personal charm and prestige and project the image of India as the greatest Asian country wedded to the ideals of peace and brotherhood.
Keeping the skeleton of Kashmir in the cupboard at home the Hindu Brahmin began to patter about peace, amity, friendship-the stock phrases of a sweet tongued diplomat.

Chou-En-Lai who attended the Bundung conference saw through the game of Nehru. He watched with amusement the gracious way of Nehru in bringing some Asian countries under his spell. Pandit

Nehru propounded his five principles hereafter called Panchshila. Bogra finding that Nehru was stealing the limelight by smooth words showed his vitality in his own way and countered the Nehru proposals with seven principles and pressed home the right of self defence either collectively of singly. During this conference, Bogra had and opportunity to meet Chou En-Lai and talk to him. He was naturally impressed and looked forward to creating good relations with the great neighbor China.

CLASH WITH GHULAM MOHAMMAD

Once Bogra felt he had installed himself as an established Prime Minister by his own right, he wanted to loosen himself from the grip of the overbearing Governor General. The Prime Minister attempted to prop up his authority by a deal with politicians to deprive the highhanded Ghulam Mohammad of power.

First PRODA which was looming over the heads as an instrument of blackmail in the hands of executives was repealed by the aggrieved politicians. It was rumoured Iskander Mirza was bringing proceedings against Fazlur Rahman and others under PRODA.

Fazlur Rahman was the architect of there bill. As usual Fazlur Rahman did not project himself into the open but preferred to remain in the shadows. They selected M.H. Gazder the Deputy President of the assembly to move the bill in this National Assembly. The PRODA was passed by narrow majority. Gazder the Deputy President was awarded with increased pay and allowances.

Bogra alarmed at the growing power and whims of Ghulam Mohammad wanted to disarm him the power of dismissal of Prime Minister or his ministers by moving an amendment. Here they moved very fast and got there bill passed when the carefree Ghulam Mohammad was holidaying at Abottabad. On hearing of this bill Ghulam Mohammad hurried to Karachi, outraged and revengeful. When Bogra left for the USA he was happy with the thought that he had been freed from the clutches of Ghulam Mohammad but fate decided otherwise. On his return to London Bogra who kept himself

in touch with Dr. Malik, was informed of the strange and sinister developments in Pakistan. When he landed at the Airport in Karachi he was a terrified creature. There was a big crowd at the airport to receive Bogra. When he met the members of his family and the ministers of his cabinet he told them to go to his residence.

Bogra was put into a car with one arm by Ayub and another by Mirza and taken to Ghulam Mohammad at the Governor General's house. When he was closeted with Ghulam Mohammad his family and the members of the cabinet were really in suspense. They were worried about the personal safety of Bogra Mohammad Ali.

At last he was let off at 2 A. M. As he got out of the car at his house he said mournfully, "I can now visualize how King Farouk must have felt when he was made to sign a treaty with the British during the Second World War." He then proceeded straight to his study followed by his cabinet ministers and announced before them, dissolve the Constituent Assembly and the cabinet will also be reshuffled tomorrow."

In his book the Pitiful and the Proud, Carl T. Rowan draws a vivid picture of the melodramatic scene at the Governor General's house. "At 2-10 on the morning of October 24, 1954, Mohammad Ali trudged home, a beaten, a weeping man. His wife still up, waiting with a few alarmed friends who feared the Prime Minister might have been killed. Mohammad collapsed in a chair and asked for water. He gulped down three glasses while a newspaper man friend cried 'tell us what happened. We will support you.' Mohammad told his friends:

The Governor General – he was a changed man – a raving maniac. Two nurses were trying to hold him down. But he kept shouting alone. I have been insulted I'll have my revenge' He demanded that his powers be restored. He had the backing of the army. He made me agree to a proclamation dissolving the Constituent Assembly and reconstituting my cabinet. I do not know what would have happened if Choudhury Mohammad Ali had not quietened him down."

Later Bogra was bullied into acceptance of the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. Bogra was an unhappy and tormented soul. He sat and wept in his house passionately resentful of the position

he had been thrust into. He had to broadcast a prepared speech announcing the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. The Government of Pakistan was again committed to him with the shadow of Ghulam Mohammad still hovering over him. The story has it that only when the Army refused to take over the country the commission was given to Mohammad Ali to form the cabinet. He was faced with two distressing alternatives either to stand up to Ghulam Mohammad and face dismissal or accept dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and form a cabinet with the new set of ministers chosen for him. Mohammad Ali had chosen the easy path of surrender and remained the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The Constituent Assembly was, however, unpopular. The surrender to dissolve the Assembly hurt the ego of Mohammad Ali but did not hurt the popular will. Even Suhrawardy wanted the Constituent Assembly to be broken and crushed.

Once Bogra decided to continue as Prime Minister he wanted to make best us of his position and put up a façade of unity in the cabinet. Into the cabinet marched the Governor of East Pakistan Mirza, the Commander-in- Chief Ayub Khan, M.A. H. Ispahani and Ghulam Mohammad Talpur and within the nest ten weeks six more Ministers including Suhrawardy.

The cabinet embraced men of variegated talents and backgrounds-men from politics to Armed forces and Civil services. Though a little terrified by the entry of such tough men Bogra Mohammad Ali called his cabinet a Ministry of talents. He wanted to renew his faith in the democracy and declared, "We are directly responsible to the people in the absence of legislature." But unhappily for him Mirza the impudent, strong man who is also a friend of Ghulam Mohammad could care less for the policies of the Prime Minister and talked of "controlled democracy".

Imagine the absurdity of the cabinet here. The Prime Minister is talking of democracy and his minister is advocating controlled democracy. Thus the Parliamentary practices and the conventions were thrown to the winds. And it appeared more than ever that Bogra was a weakling and a feckless Prime Minister trapped by the iron will of Ghulam Mohammad and by his own personal ambition. He could do nothing but accept the humiliation quietly.

Suhrawardy had a chance to succeed Bogra Mohammad Ali as Prime minister but unfortunately due to the political manoeuvre of Bogra Mohammad Ali, Choudhury Mohammad Ali and Iskander Mirza, Suhrawardy missed the chance. The drama of this manoeaver was enacted at the Pine scented hill station of Murree. It all started with an agreement between parliamentary party of the Awami League and that of the Muslim League. The agreement took place on 5 points which were as follows:

(1) One unit,
(2) Joint Electorate,
(3) Parity in all respects,
(4) Bengali to be state language along with Urdu,
(5) Full Regional Autonomy.

There was another point – 6th points which was left unwritten. That was the agreement to make Suhrawardy Prime Minister.

On behalf of the Muslim League the agreement was signed by the Prime Minister Bogra Mohammad Ali, Choudhury Mohammad Ali and Gurmani and Dr. Khan Shaheb. For the Awami League the agreement was signed by Ataur Rahman Khan, Abul Mansur and Suhrawardy.

In course of time however, Choudhury Mohammad Ali became the leader of parliamentary party of the Muslim making Suhrawardy as the Prime Minister. But unfortunately a new twist was in the making. Fazlul Huq told Bogra casually "Let anybody be the Prime Minister except Suhrawardy". Bogra jealous of Suhrawardy prodded Fazlul Huq to pursue his wishes and advised Mirza not to induct Suhrawardy. Mirza was ready to accept the advice of Bogra as he was afraid of Suhrawardy's personality and brilliance and that he might be overshadowed by Suhrawardy.

It was almost a settled fact that Bogra should resign and Suhrawardy would take over the Prime Ministership – the post he had been aspiring to hold since his landing in Pakistan for permanent residence. Suhrawardy was going to be sworn in at any moment at Murree. One day Bogra Mohammad Ali came to the Awami League MNAs and said there was an emergency; as such the swearing – in- ceremony had to be delayed.

Bogra broke the news that Afghanistan attacked Pakistan from Kandahar side. Mirza in fact showed a telegram to that effect. Besides Governor General Ghulam Mohammad had been away to Geneva for treatment. The constituent assembly had been postponed immediately after 14 days of its sitting. It was decided that the next session should be held in Karachi. Ghulam Mohammad who had earlier let down Suhrawardy wanted to see him this time as the Prime Minister. To make the path of Choudhury Mohammad Ali leave initially for three months.

Mirza who succeeded Ghulam Mohammad enjoyed to be called strong man. He did not like another strong man Suhrawardy to be the Prime Minister. Bogra a recently turned rival of Suhrawardy and a Bengalee did not like another Bengalee to succeed him.

Choudhury Mohammad Ali who was looking forward to succeed Bogra Mohammad Ali naturally could not like his rival Suhrawardy. So they all combined themselves to resort to a guile. Bogra as a matter of fact confided to his relations later, "Suhrawardy would have become the Prime Minister had we not resorted to a trick". All went in favour of Choudhury Mohammad Ali. He seized the opportunity to become the Prime Minister forgetting his earlier assurance to make Suhrawardy Prime Minister. Bogra wanted to see that Suhrawardy was not tipped as the Prime Minister before he left Pakistan for his diplomatic assignment.

The relationship between Bogra and Suhrawardy was strange and inexplicable. Bogra started as a disciple of Suhrawardy but later in life ended up as a rival and a great rival at that. It was a love-hate relationship. There is one incident which showed Bogra in an unsympathetic and surly mood towards Suhrawardy. Suhrawardy lay ill in Zurich and had made an urgent plea to his party men in Dhaka for Rs. 10,000/= His disciples accordingly arranged some money about Rs. 7,500/= for remittance to Zurich.

Meanwhile Bogra Mohammad Ali the Prime Minister had issued a directive to the State Bank asking them not to grant any foreign exchange to Suhrawardy. When Suhrawardy's friends went to the State Bank, Dhaka for foreign exchange they were refused. By this time they heard about the directive of the Prime Minister

Mohammad Ali. What could they do? They straight away went to Ghulam Mohammad the then Governor General and sought for his help in remitting Rs. 7,500/= in foreign exchange. Ghulam Mohammad immediately telephoned the State Bank, Karachi and asked them to issue the foreign exchange for Suhrawardy forthwith.

After the remittance the friends of Suhrawardy met Bogra Mohammad Ali in Karachi, they told him casually "money had been dispatched". Bogra Mohammad Ali who could not understand it, queried, "Has the money been deposited" "No, money has been sent to Suhrawardy", was the reply. He could not believe that the money had been sent to Suhrawardy flouting his own directive. When Suhrawardy's friends explained everything and asked Bogra Mohammad Ali why he had taken action in stopping foreign exchange for Suhrawardy, Bogra replied, "Suhrawardy does not really need money. He is not so ill. He wanted money for his fun in Europe".

MOHAMMAD ALI BACK IN USA

Bogra Mohammad Ali cast out from the high office of Prime Minister found himself a political destitute. He was, however, re-assigned as an Ambassador to the USA. There is an interesting anecdote about Mohammad Ali Bogra during this period. When Bogra was still an Ambassador in US, Suhrawardy had succeeded Choudhury Mohammad Ali as a Prime Minister. There was news more of a scoop in the New York Times that Choudhury Mohammad Ali former prime Minister would be appointed as and Ambassador.

Bogra was upset. He had of course added reason to believe the story. Bogra remembered that while he was a Prime Minister he refused foreign exchange to Suhrawardy when the latter was in Zurich for treatment. Besides, Bogra played an important role in frustrating the move of Suhrawardy to become the Prime Minister after Bogra. But now after a little more than a year, he is thrown at the mercy of Suhrawardy for his job.

At about midnight, Bogra along with his wife Aliya knocked at

the door of a Pakistan delegate, a fiend of Suhrawardy at the UN. Bogra held the New York Times in his hand and told him about the news. Bogra asked the delegate to write to Suhrawardy for him. It was however, decided that Bogra should write for himself to Suhrawardy. Bogra wrote. After a few days Bogra walked into the lobby of the UNO Building and beaming with joy showed Suhrawardy's telegram to the delegate. It was couched in an affectionate tone, "You are as silly as you have been in Calcutta days'. Bogra was delighted by the sympathy and affection Suhrawardy still holds for him.

When he was posted as an Ambassador to the US, Bogra's polygamy created uneasiness to the State department. It was upto a foreign country to accept or reject a foreign diplomat. Polygamy is illegal in the US. Besides, there was the question of official recognition of the wife and granting of diplomatic immunity to one wife only – his second wife Aliya. Hamida lived now in New Jersey as a lesser wife with her two sons Hamid Ali and Hammad Ali. It was not sure that Hamid Ali enjoyed diplomatic immunity.

It so happened that Hamid Ali killed a man while driven a car. The question that cropped up was whether the boy enjoyed diplomatic immunity so that he could escape harassment. Bogra a clever man as he was immediately brought the boy to Washington to live with him. In order that the fact of living with him got enough publicity he took the boy clad in Turban and Sherwani to a dinner Party of the President Eisenhower. The boy got the publicity as well as the diplomatic immunity.

There is another anecdote which found him in altercation with a high way police man in the United States of America. Bogra was a lover of fast cars. Once he was speeding away faster than the rule of the road. The policeman stopped his car and handed him a ticket. Bogra the Ambassador told the policeman that he enjoyed diplomatic immunity and as such he could not be given a ticket. A ticket means a fine of one dollar. As he was arguing with the policeman which means obstruction of the duty of a policeman, he was given another ticket. Bogra, enraged, told, "I may pay the fine but be sure, you are to return the money to me". The policeman was

not impressed and gave him another ticket for committing public nuisance.

The policeman did not understand the niceties of diplomatic immunity an asserted that he was doing according to law of the land. Bogra exasperated by the multiple fines went to the nearest police station along with the policeman. The police station could not help Bogra as they were not also aware of diplomatic immunity for offence of the road. Bogra was embarrassed and made a trunk call to the State Department. The State Department asked the police station to deposit the money in favour of the State Department.

The policeman in a mood of triumph told the Ambassador, "So you see you are not right. I am not to return the money to you."

While Bogra was enjoying the life traversing the length and breadth of America particularly during the week ends and still enjoying reputation as a successful Ambassador, a new fateful event overtook the nation.

The Martial Law was clamped down with unknowable consequences for the destiny of men. Bogra also got to know that some politicians and top civil servants had been arrested. Bogra was alarmed. He was counting his days of recall but nothing happened.

The new government had started cleansing the mess at home. Their turn in the foreign countries had not come yet. As a matter of policy all the non-career diplomats were recalled. This happened in 1950 when he was Ambassador in Japan. Bogra was ill with eye trouble and was allowed by the government one year extension on his pleading.

The story is also told that he wrote a letter to the President that he was more than a career diplomat as he had served as an Ambassador for a longer period than most of the career diplomats. And he should be allowed to continue. The new government could not accept his plea.

BOGRA BECOMES FOREIGN MINISTER

He returned to his native town of Bogra in 1961 and soon plunged himself into the election of 1962 to assert his political might

on his own right. He won the election without any serious contest from his nearest rival. He then decided to stand as a speaker in the National Assembly. The Muslim League, by then a defunct body, swung its support to Tamizuddin. West Pakistan also preferred Tamizuddin a venerable and respectable man with no political liability in his past. They did not like Bogra's shifting loyalty, flamboyance and his refractory nature. Tamizuddin won the election easily.

Bogra however remained undismayed. As a tried politician who had seen ups and downs and at times humiliation he had by now known all the approaches of politics and power. He knew when to assert his personality and how to draw the attention of the President Ayub.

He heard that the President did not think much of him. He was smarting under that grievance. He wanted to prove his worth and his leadership quality and impress Ayub. He now started contacting all the Bengali MNAs about 72 in number. He skillfully and shrewdly applied all his logic, persuasion and charm upon them patently in the interests of East Pakistan. He evolved four specific demands after parley with younger elements among the MNAs.

The demands sounded reasonable and attractive. They were: 1) Release of all political prisoners in both the wings.(2) Democratization of the Constitution including justifiability of fundamental rights; (3) Power of determining the vires of laws framed and executive actions taken in relation to the Constitution to vest in the High Courts and finally in the Supreme court; and (4) Balanced economic development of the country, in particular, of East Pakistan.

With all his passionate desire to forge the unity to the East Pakistan MNAs and to get all the demands met by the government Bogra remained, however, the fallible link in the unity and cohesion of the East Pakistani MNAs. This was a weakness in his character which was ominous and baffling to the East Pakistani MNAs and the people. Bogra met the President and talked of the demands of East Pakistan. He further told Ayub that in order to make the 1962

constitution acceptable to the people of East Pakistan, the MNAs who had unchallengeable sway in their regions should be preferred as ministers in the cabinet. Bogra told Ayub that the constitution had been rejected by all the political leaders like Suhrawardy and the Awami League, Nazimuddin of the Council Muslim League, Choudhury Mohammad Ali of Nezam-e-Islam.

He advised the President that the regional political bosses like Sabur Khan, Fazlul Quader Chowdhury and others would be great asset to him. The argument impressed Ayub. It is told that the President asked him to suggest a list of names for Ministership. President considered the list and also decided that Bogra Mohammad Ali himself should be the Foreign minister and Leader of the House.

Bogra who was left at the mercy of the government for his continuation in diplomatic job at last stood out as a Foreign Minister by his own right. Bogra was grateful to Ayub Khan. To him now self assurance and confidence returned. He now gratefully pledged his loyalty. He declared that he had entered the cabinet "with a spirit of dedication and service of the people". The people however thought he betrayed the interests of East Pakistan by breaking the unity of the MNAs for glamour of power and position.

The conduct of leaders like Bogra Mohammad Ali is the cause of disrespect and cynicism of the East Pakistani people towards their leaders. As a Foreign Minister he visited London in 1963 and addressed the meeting of Pakistan Students federation of Britain in London. I happened to be present there. He talked of Kashmir and one unit. It was quite a sensible speech. The students, however, heckled him all the way and he took at very sportingly. He took pains to shake hands with everybody-about seventy in the meeting. Some of the law students lashed him mercilessly for his joining the 'undemocratic government'.

Both Bogra and Manzur Quader wanted to cozy up to Ayub Khan. Bogra did not relish the influence and friendship of Manzur Quader and called him, "Rasputin cooling his heels in Nathiagali'. No President would like to be effete as Nicholas II. President, however, ignored such irresponsible effusion of Mohammad Ali

against a former colleague.

Bhutto, an ambitious, brilliant, extrovert and youth full leader was very much liked by Ayub Khan. He cast covetous eyes upon the post of the Foreign Minister and had been all the while maneuvering to take his place. Ayub did not encourage such ambition. Bhutto however, became Foreign Minister after the death of Bogra.

MOHAMMAD ALI AS A MAN

Bogra was a full time politician and a part time patriot. He was dedicated to politics, power and fun. But he loved power more than politics and he loved politics more than fun. He was a patriot in a pragmatic sense –a patriot as most Pakistani politicians are.

He could sacrifice himself for the cause of Pakistan as easily and spontaneously as he could sacrifice the interest of Pakistan for the cause of himself. In a crucial moment he could let down loyalty, unity and democracy only to be Prime Minister or Foreign Minister. He still could say he was doing everything for Pakistan. And he believed in what he said.

Bogra was predictable. It was easy to satisfy him. Give him office and power, he is satisfied. Principle, political morality and consistency were not what he always valued. In other man this aspect of character would have made him an unwholesome man. But his warm urbanity, infectious smiles and amiable disposition relieved much of the wayward impulses of his character. Two decisions pockmarked his political career – one was towards Suhrawardy, another to Ayub Khan.

Mohammads Ali built up his career step by step and in fact he was a loving disciple of Suhrawardy. But when he found the fall of Suhrawardy at the hands of Nazimuddin from the parliamentary leadership of the new State of East Bengal, Bogra immediately turned his loylty to Nazimuddin.

Nazimuddin's friends called this new loylty a sign of love for Pakistan. But others called him an opportunist, pure and simple. Again after the MNAs election in 1962, he headed the united group of the East Pakistan MNAs to attract attention from Ayub Khan. He

even denounced the 1962 Constitution. But after he was offered the Foreign Ministership he blithely accepted the offer saying "I shall get a chance to amend the constitution working within the government." Bogra might not have been always soft toward his political rivals but his friends say his heart was large and kindly. Bogra the Ambassador acquired an expensive watch and he was showing to his distant relation and an employee, Latifullah. It was Movado Calendro. Graph gold watch showing calendar date, moon etc. Bogra was relating how he got the watch from Geneva and had 20% rebate. Latifullah admired the watch and said that he liked it very much.

Bogra gave this watch to Latifullah on his next birthday as a present. Bogra also told that he had placed an order for a new watch for Latifullah and showed him the receipt and told him, "When you get the new watch from Geneva, this one may be returned to me."

Another story about his informality an warm humanity. Bogra was sitting in his Embassy room in Washington and a phone call rang out from an officer Hossain Ali of Pakistan High Commission in Canada. Hossain told him that "his wife lay seriously ill in hospital and going for an operation. She is very upset." Hossain asked the Ambassador to ring up Hossain's wife in the hospital and talk to her with some words of sympathy. Bogra immediately replied over phone, "Of course, yes, I am doing it immediately. Is she available on phone?" Bogra obliged his wife accordingly.

K. V. Vorys, an American Research Scholar on 'Political Development in Pakistan' says, "Even when he was at home he was too busy and let everyone know it. A random sample in his birthplace indicates he created the image of an 'Important Man'. Traditional leaders tended to shy away from him. Politicians distrusted him." Again Professor Keith Callard in his book, "A Political Study on Pakistan", says, "Bogra had few enemies but no popular following and he was incapable of having one."

Mohammad Ali Bogra, a respectable man and a loving father was an ordinary decent man not so much bad as weak, not so stupid as office loving. But he was far from vain and prude. It seems a surprise how such a common place decent man could become trapped in a senseless and sordid political mess. It is possible that

the weakness of his character and ambition for power made him so.

Bogra was however a man of many accomplishments. A good speaker in English, he was a man with persuasive skill and a marvelous vote getter. He was fond of fast and sleek cars and of good cameras. From his boyhood he mastered a new art – politics.

For his family that was an accomplishment particularly when his father failed with all the panoply of power, prestige and opportunity. The sight of shapely beauty brought glint into his eyes. Bogra had warmth, folksiness and back slapping informality. He was smooth, easy and affable and his temperament electric. He had a ready smile and spread a sheen of charm over the men he came into contact. He had little of political spite and meanness – so little that he could almost pass as a gentleman. Gentlemanliness is a rare quality in the cut-throat politics of Pakistan.

Bogra possessed spontaneous capacity for being himself. He was at ease with everybody, great and small alike. This is one of the virtues that endeared him to many. Born in feudal aristocracy, politics came to him easily and naturally even from his student days. Then in adult life he had swung to and fro in varied positions of power till he was catapulted to the office of the Prime Minister. That was the height of his success. His friends say success luckily came to him in stages but satisfaction never. He passed away in 1963 at the age of only 54.