

An Open Access, Widely Indexed, Peer Reviewed Referred
Journal

Vol. 1 No. 2, June, 2024

Alumni of the University of Dhaka, Mujibnagar Government, and the Emergence of Bangladesh: A Historical Analysis

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Liberation War
of Bangladesh, Mujibnagar
Government, People's
Republic of Bangladesh,
Dhaka University, Awami
League

Received : 07, April

Revised : 20, May

Accepted: 29, May

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ABSTRACT

The Liberation War of Bangladesh began on 26 March 1971, protesting Operation Searchlight's mass killing. Tajuddin Ahmad, for the first time, felt the necessity to form a new government to lead the Liberation War. The People's Republic of Bangladesh government (PRB government), popularly known as the Mujibnagar Government, was formed on 10 April and took oath on 17 April 1971 under his leadership. He was the General Secretary of Awami League (AL) and Dhaka University (DU) alumnus. The PRB government had 15 ministries and divisions. Everywhere, the role of the alumni of DU was notable. They led the government from different fronts and played a vital role in Bangladesh's independence. The PRB government was a democratic and the first lawful government of Bangladesh. The government also respected public opinion by taking oaths to the national and international communities. The present paper explores the role of DU's alumni in the formation and oath-taking program of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Government. It also focuses on the role of DU alums in the different sectors of the government.

INTRODUCTION

The People's Republic of Bangladesh Government, popularly known as the Mujibnagar Government, was formed during the Liberation War of 1971. The alumni of the University of Dhaka played a vital role in the government's formation and activities. Operation Searchlight provided the government with background information. It was a brutal and planned military operation carried out by the Pakistan army on 25 March 1971. The operation was unleashed on the unaware, sleeping Bengali people of East Bengal at midnight to demolish them as a nation. The Bengali nation measured the operation as a war and started their resistance against the military government. It signified the beginning of Bangladesh's Liberation War. Tajuddin Ahmad, for the first time, felt the necessity to form a new government to lead the Liberation War. The People's Republic of Bangladesh government (PRB government) was formed on 10 April and took oath on 17 April 1971 under his leadership. He was the General Secretary of AL and an alumnus of the University of Dhaka (DU). The PBR government had 15 ministries and divisions. Everywhere, the role of the alumni of DU was notable. The ministries, secretariat, planning commission, and other government sectors were full of DU alumni. They led the government from different fronts and played a crucial role in Bangladesh's independence. This article explores the role of DU's alumni in the formation and oath-taking program of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Government. It also focuses on the role of DU alumni in the different sectors of the government.

DISCUSSION

DU ALUMNI IN THE FORMATION OF THE PRB GOVERNMENT

The People's Republic of Bangladesh Government was an exiled government. There are many examples of the formation of the government in exile in different parts of the world. For instance, during the Second World War, the Free French Government of Charles de Gaulle and the Government of Exile of Poland established their head office in London. PLO established its head office in Beirut, Lebanon's capital; Amman, Jordan's capital; and Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, at different times. The head office of the Mujahideen of Afghanistan was in Peshawar, Pakistan, for ten years. The head office of Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk government was in Beijing, China, for a long time (Imam, 2020, pp. 31-32). In Bangladesh, Tajuddin Ahmad, for the first time, realized the necessity to form a government in exile after the Operation Searchlight massacre. H.T. Imam said Tajuddin was not only the government's founder but also the government's architect and heart (Imam, 2020, p.51). The cause behind the formation of the government was to create a political and military leadership to ensure the emergence of an independent Bangladesh. Political leadership was required to lead the war under the leadership of an independent government, to establish the supremacy of the AL over the war, to establish proper diplomatic relations abroad, to take all forms of help from India, and to clarify the message

to the world that it was a war for independence. Otherwise, the world would recognize the Liberation War as a civil war, and the Pakistani government could legitimize their killing and brutality in the name of establishing peace and harmony inside the country. The military leadership was necessary to form *Mukti Bahini*, sector commanders, and other forces to ensure military training, arms, and ammunition and lead the war.

Different names were used to call the government. The government's official name was the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh government because the 10th April and 17th April Proclamation of Independence defined the government by the same name (Rahman, 2011, p.5). Besides, the government was also identified as Mujibnagar Government as it took formal oath at Mujibnagar on 17th April (Tajuddin renamed Baidyanathtala, Mujibnagar). It was called Mujibnagar Government-in-exile because government activities had been conducted outside Bangladesh. It was called the Provincial Government of Bangladesh because it was a temporary government. It can also be called the DU alumni-backed government because most of the ministers, secretaries, and other government employees were alumni of the DU.

Some of the prominent alumni of DU played a leading role in forming the PRB government. Tajuddin Ahmad and Barrister M. Amir-ul Islam, distinguished leaders of AL, took the initiative first. Tajuddin Ahmad completed his Honours and Master's degrees from the DU Economics department. Barrister Aminul Islam completed his bachelor's degree in political science, economics, and History from DU in 1956. On the night of 25th March 1971, they took shelter at a house in Lalmatia, Dhaka, and secretly left Dhaka on 27th March for India. Through the Kushtia and Chuadanga districts, they reached the Chengrakhali border, near the Medinipur district in India. They met with Mahbub Uddin Ahmed and Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, the Sub-Divisional Police Officer of Jhenaidah and the Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) of Meherpur. Tawfiq-e-Elahi earned his bachelor's in economics from DU in 1964. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed also was an alumnus of DU. Tawfiq-e-Elahi said that on 30th March, Mahbub met him with Barrister Amir-ul Islam and Tajuddin Ahmad. Mahbub introduced them and asked whether he could arrange a meeting with the Indian officials to cross the border (The Daily Star 2021). Elahi agreed, and both went to the Indian border with a message that two senior leaders of AL would like to meet Shrimati Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India. They want to cross the border only if received according to state protocol. Being assured, they crossed the Tongi border of Nadia on 30th March 1971. Indian officials received them warmly with a guard of honour. Later, Golok Bihari Majumder (Indian Border Security Force head of the Eastern Command, Deputy Director of Border Security Force) welcomed them to India. Amir-ul Islam asked him what India's response was regarding the war. Golok answered that only Prime Minister Indira Gandhi could provide India's reaction. However, he could arrange a meeting with the Prime Minister. He escorted them to Dum Dum Airport, where BSF Chief KF Rustamji (Director General BSF) received them warmly. Then, they were taken

to Assam Bhaban, a state guest house in Kolkata, by a black car (Islam 2015). Golok said he welcomed Tajuddin and Amirul Islam at the Tongi border on 30th March and arranged their accommodation in Assam Bhaban. It was the time when the situation in West Bengal was dreadful due to the Naxalite movement. 31st March was observed in the *band* in West Bengal. In that critical situation, he and Rustam Ji arranged their security, accommodation, clothes, and other staff and prepared them for going to Delhi. He added that Rustam Ji prepared them for Delhi, much like how parents prepare a bride to send to the groom's house (Majumder, 1971). Amir-ul Islam said Golok was the virtual host of the PRB government from day one (Islam, 2015). Golok and Rustamji informed the Prime Minister's office about their arrival and took the initiative to send them to Delhi (Habib, 2017, p.69). On 1st April, Tajuddin and Amirul Islam reached Delhi accompanied by Golok Majumder in a military cargo plane. They selected the cargo plane to hide their journey from all the agencies in India (Rahman, 2021, p. 69). They could meet the Prime Minister on 4th April because Indian intelligence agencies took three days to confirm their identity. Amirul Islam said some of the intelligence agencies, including RAW, discussed with them several times and wanted to make sure that they belonged to the apex body of the AL (Rahman, 2021, p. 70). Golok Majumdar said RAW and the other agencies tried to ensure they were the right people. Finally, Rehman Sobhan and Anisur Rahman, DU teachers who reached Delhi earlier, confirmed their identity (Rahman, 2021, p. 70). Golok Majumdar said that, at last, two Bengali economists assured their identity (Majumder, 1971).

Tajuddin Ahmed and Indira Gandhi met at two crucial meetings in Delhi. The first meeting was held on 4th April. In the meeting, Tajuddin requested Indira Gandhi to provide all kinds of support for the Liberation War of Bangladesh. He mainly focused on India's recognition of Bangladesh (Majumder, 1971). They offered military training, arms, and ammunition for the *Mukti Bahini* and accommodation for the Bengali refugees (Rahman, 2021, p. 71). After the meeting, the Indian Government took two necessary decisions. The first one was that India would open the border for the Bangladeshi refugees who wanted to take shelter from the mass killings perpetrated by the Pakistan Army. The second was that the government would allow the Bengali people to continue their political activities inside Indian Territory (Habib, 2017, p.70). The second meeting was held on 5th April. Tajuddin Ahmad and Indira Gandhi made other important decisions, such as the Bangladesh government staying in India to lead the Liberation War. The Indian government would arrange military training and arms for the freedom fighters. They also would arrange accommodation for the Bengali refugees. A radio station would be established in India to broadcast the news of the Liberation War (Habib, 2017, p.70). The Indian government was very cordial on the question of Bangladesh's independence. Maidul Hasan mentioned three causes for the support: a. India continued to have a hostile relationship with Pakistan for a long time; b. AL and the Indian National Congress had similar thoughts on parliamentary democracy and communalism; c. India sympathized with Bangladesh on humanitarian grounds. They could not simply witness the

brutal killing by the Pakistan Army as the neighbouring country (Hasan, 2020, pp. 11-12).

Getting favour from the Indian government, Tajuddin started laying the foundation for the PRB government in Delhi. Amirul Islam said that when they were in Delhi, they realized that they should talk to the Indian government as the representative of the Bangladesh government. So, they prepared a rough plan for the government to be formed with the five highest leaders of the AL. They were Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, President of AL; Tajuddin Ahmed, secretary of AL; Syed Nazrul Islam, Kamruzzamn, and Khandakar Mostak, Vice-Presidents of the party. They also decided that Tajuddin would be the Prime Minister. Evidence showed that Amirul Islam and Rehman Sobhan drafted and recorded the speech of Tajuddin as the Prime Minister in Delhi. At the beginning of the speech, Amirul Islam's voice said, "Now Tajuddin delivers his speech on the nation (Rahman, 2021, pp. 71-73)." All of them were alumni of DU.

After returning to Kolkata, they faced severe opposition from the Sheikh Fazlul Haq Mani group regarding forming the new government. Mani obtained an MA in Bangla literature and a Law degree from the DU. One night, an AL meeting was held at Sinha Road, Kolkata. Tajuddin Ahmed, Kamruzzaman, Amirul Islam, Mizan Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Haq Mani, Tofail Ahmed, and others were present. Most of them were alumni of DU. In the meeting, Tajuddin presented his government plan. Sheikh Mani opposed the proposal. He argued that the Liberation War had started, Bangabandhu was held captive at the enemy camp, Bengali youth were sacrificing their blood, and no ministry could be formed in such circumstances. Nonetheless, he proposed to form a Revolutionary Council to lead the Liberation War. Barrister Amir-ul Islam explained the drawbacks of the Council. He argued that different factions could also create their councils. In that case, the freedom fighters, the masses, and even the foreign government would be misguided and confused about the council's role and may refuse to work with them. The formation of the government means establishing the rights of the masses. Before confirming the right, if a revolutionary council were formed, it would insult the fundamental rights of the masses. At last, most of the leaders accepted the government's proposal.

The youth leader, Mani, persisted in his position against the formation of the government. He opposed the proposed broadcast of Tajuddin Ahmed's recorded speech. He even sent an application to the Prime Minister of India with the signatures of forty-two AL and *Jubo* League leaders, requesting that Tajuddin's initiative be stopped (Hasan, 2020, pp. 14-15). The leadership problem was visible because Sheikh Mujib did not publicly announce who would lead the AL in his absence. Tajuddin led the war as the secretary and second in command of AL. Conversely, Mani wanted to lead the war as a prominent DU student leader and Mujib's close relative.

At last, the PRB government was formed under the leadership of Tajuddin Ahmed on 10th April 1971. The formation process of the PRB government was entirely distinct because the recorded speech of Tajuddin Ahmed was broadcast first on 10 April. Tajuddin, Monsur Ali, Sheikh Mani, Tofail Ahmed, and Amirul Islam traveled to Agartala on a small plane on 10th April. Tofail Ahmed

graduated from the DU with an MS in Soil science. Barring Monsor Ali, all of them were alumni of DU. On the way, they landed at the Bagdogra Airport and went to Siliguri on a Jeep, where Golok Majumdar received them warmly. According to the plan, they sent Tajuddin's recorded speech to an irregular radio station in a jungle for broadcasting. Tajuddin encountered fierce opposition from Mani there. Mani pushed Tajuddin not to broadcast the speech but called a party meeting in Agartala, where the decision would be taken together. When Amirul Islam tried to convince Mani, he argued that Bangabandhu had empowered him. So, it was not suitable for them to question his decision. Tajuddin became irritated and told Amirul Islam to stop the broadcast. Amirul Islam then called Majumdar and requested that the broadcast be stopped. However, it was impossible because the station was in a jungle, and they were about to begin the broadcast. Finally, Tajuddin Ahmed's recorded speech was broadcast from that irregular radio station in Siliguri on 10th April (Rahman, 2021, pp. 75-77). Thus, the PRB government was formed.

Later, the government's news was broadcast through print and electronic media. For instance, *Akashbani Kolkata* and *Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro* broadcasted the speech on 11 April; Sharmin Ahmad said all of their family members could hear the news from Akashbani Kolkata through the voice of Dev Dolal Benarjee that the Bangladesh government had been formed. Tajuddin was the Prime Minister (Ahmad, 2015, pp. 69-70). *The Times of India* (13 April 1971) reported that the formation of the government was announced in a broadcast from the newly set-up Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra. At the beginning of the speech, Tajuddin congratulated all the people on behalf of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his newly formed government. He said Bangladesh is independent today; Bangladesh is free today. Throughout his speech, he praised the Bengali people's heroism, bravery, and revolutionary fervour for their resistance and sacrifice. He called upon all the Bengali people inside and outside the country to participate directly in the war or assist by procuring money, arms, or other ways. He also called upon other independent countries to help Bangladesh with arms, money, and other logistical support. At the end of his speech, he said, 'Joy Bangla' and 'Joy Swadhin Bangladesh.' (Rahman, 2021, pp. 7-12).

After the broadcast, the world, for the first time, learned that Tajuddin had led the formation of the PRB government. The government had six ministers. *The Statesman* (13 April 1971) of Kolkata wrote that a six-member cabinet of the sovereign democratic Republic of Bangladesh was formed somewhere in East Bengal. *The Times of India* (13 April 1971) wrote that a six-member war cabinet was formed in Bangladesh. The cabinet members were Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, Khondaker Mostak, Captin Mansoor Ali, and A.H.M Kamruzzaman. The government's headquarters would be in Chuadanga, the liberated area.

After forming the government, acting president Syed Nazrul Islam published an Order with his signature. In the Order, he said,

I, Syed Nazrul Islam, the Vice President and Acting President of Bangladesh, in the exercise of the powers conferred on me by the Proclamation of Independence dated the tenth day of April 1971, do hereby order that all laws that were in force

in Bangladesh on 25 March 1971, shall subject to the Proclamation aforesaid continue to be so in force with such consequential changes as may be necessary on account of the creation of the sovereign independent State of Bangladesh formed by the will of the people of Bangladesh and that all government officials-civil, military, judicial and diplomatic- who take the oath of allegiance to Bangladesh shall continue in their offices on terms and conditions of service so long enjoyed by them and that all District judges and District Magistrates, in the territory of Bangladesh and all diplomatic representatives elsewhere shall arrange to administer the oath of allegiance to all government officials within their jurisdiction. This order shall be deemed to have come into effect from the 26 day of March 1971. Signed: Syed Nazrul Islam, Acting President (Rahman, 2021, p. 6).

Tajuddin reached Agartala on 11 April and met with the prominent Awami League leaders. They debated the PRB government extensively. The most notable were Mani, Syed Nazrul Islam, Khandakar Mostak, and Professor Mohammad Yusuf Ali. Syed Nazrul Islam obtained his MA in History in 1947 and LLB in 1953 from DU. Khandakar Mostak earned his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Dhaka. Professor Mohammad Yusuf Ali earned an MA in Bengali Language and Literature from DU in 1953. It came to know that Khandakar Mostak desired to be the new government's prime minister (Uzzaman, 2017, p. 169). Mani also wanted to lead the government. MR Siddiki said,

We expected that Syed Nazrul Islam, being next to Sheikh Mujib as 1st Vice-President, would head the government as Prime Minister, but Mr. Tajuddin said he had already told Mrs. Gandhi that he was the Prime Minister and our credibility would be gone if we changed it. Khondoker Mustaque Ahmed did not agree, and most MNAs disagreed. As a result, deadlock arose (Siddeiki, 2011, p. 185).

Faruk Aziz Khan said, "He (Moni) thought that as a nephew of the Bangabandhu, he was the right person to take over the leadership of the Bangladesh Government in exile (Khan, 199, p. 184)." Their central allegation against Tajuddin was that he alone met with Ghandi without consulting the high command of the Awami League and formed the government, which was incorrect. In response, Tajuddin said he did not know whether the topmost leaders of the Awami League were alive or not, even though he did not know the latest situation of Sheikh Mujib. Under those circumstances, he met with the government alone (Uzzaman, 2017, p. 190-91). Other allegations were that Tajuddin was responsible for Mujib's arrest, did it to get the leadership, and was responsible for India's late recognition. Some also alleged Tajuddin to be a leftist politician. However, after a vast debate, the previous ministry remained unchanged.

DU ALUMNI IN THE OATH-TAKING PROGRAM

Some alumni of DU played a vital role in organizing the oath-taking program of the PRB government. The PRB government took a formal oath on 17th April 1971 on a small stage under the mango grove of Baiddanathhala in Meherpur of Kushtia District. Baiddanathhala was located on Bangladeshi soil along the India-

Bangladesh border. Almost all the leaders and organizers of the program were alumni of DU. Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Bir Bikram, was one of the chief local organizers of the swearing-in ceremony. He was SDO of Meherpur and alumnus of DU. He said that on 16th April, they learned that Baiddanathola had been selected for the program. He and Mahbub Uddin Ahmed quickly went to the spot and took charge of the arrangement for the oath-taking program. Mahbub also was a student of DU. They prepared a modest dais. Local Italian missionaries provided all the chairs (The Daily Star, 17 April 2021). Amirul Islam and Moudud Ahmed addressed the national and international journalists at the meeting (Uzzaman, 2017, p. 169). Both were alumni of DU. The Indian government arranged 100 vehicles for the occasion. Among them, 50 were for the journalists, and 50 were for the AL leaders (Majumder, 1971). The PRB government ministers and many international media arrived at the spot around 10-11 morning (The Daily Star, 16 July 2015). Around a hundred foreign journalists and thousands of spectators presented the place to witness the birth of a new state (Mohsin et al., 2017, p. 580). The program's security was arranged in two phases. The first is by the Bengali police and EPR members under the leadership of Mahbub Uddin Ahmed (Uzzaman, 2017, p.169). The other is by Golok Majumder. Golok mentioned that about 100 commandos encircled the program area. They also were equipped to resist airstrikes or cannon fire. Due to their initiatives, the oath-taking program was concluded peacefully. It came to know that only two hours later, the program place was occupied by the Pakistani Army (Chowdhury, 1985, p.73).

The oath-taking program started with reciting the Holy Quran. Muhammad Baker Ali, a local student in class ten, recited from the Holy Quran 9Ahmad, 2015, p. 73). Syed Nazrul Islam raised the national flag while the national anthem of Bangladesh was sung. Abdul Mannan conducted the meeting. Amir-ul Islam drafted the Proclamation of Independence, and Rehman Sobhan prepared a declaration mentioning the background of the proclamation and the genocide of the Pakistan Army (Sobhan, 2017, p.141), and Professor Mohammad Yusuf Ali read it. All of them were DU alumni. The first Declaration of Independence was proclaimed on 26 March. However, the proclamation again became necessary to ensure the new government's legitimacy. The Proclamation mentioned that to ensure equality, human dignity, and social justice for the people of Bangladesh, they declared and constituted Bangladesh a sovereign People's Republic. The Proclamation of Independence would be deemed to have come into effect from the 26 of March 1971 (Habib, 2017, pp. 87-88). Syed Nazrul Islam received a guard of honour from a small team led by Bir Bikram Mahbub Uddin Ahmed and Naik Subedar Tofazzal Hossain. Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury said,

Maj. Soman, who was to lead the contingent of EPR for the guard of honour, had not arrived. Time was running out fast. I asked Mahbub whether he could pull his police experience to devise a solution. Instantly, he agreed and started rehearsing with the assortment of Ansar and Mujahids posted at the border outpost to guard it symbolically." (The Daily Star, 17 April, 2021)

Tajuddin named the place Mujibnagar by the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. After the partition of 1947, Mujib was admitted into the Law

Department of DU but could not complete it because he was expelled from the DU in early 1949 and was in charge of 'inciting the fourth-class employees' against the University. For the rest of the war, the government settled in Kolkata briefly at a house on Ballyganj Circular Road and then at 8 Theatre Road.

In the oath-taking ceremony, Syed Nazrul Islam, acting President in his speech, said,

Today in this Mango Grove, a new nation is born. Therefore, I can affirm that the new state that has won its place today on the map of the world shall live on forever. No power on the earth shall be able to obliterate it (Habib, 2017, p. 89).” Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed, in a press statement, said that Bangladesh was at war. It had been given no choice but to secure its right from the colonial oppression of West Pakistan. He said the struggle was for survival. Bangladesh would be the eighth-most populous country in the world. He appealed to the world's nations for recognition and assistance, both material and moral, in the struggle for nationhood. He also provided a historical background of the war (Rahman, 2011, pp. 21-29). The oath-taking ceremony was necessary for the government's legitimacy and publicity.

Regarding the new government, *Ananda Bazar* newspaper wrote that the People's Republic of Bangladesh emerged as an independent country on 17 April. It declared an independent country of 7.5 crore Bengali people (Anandabazar, 18 April 1971). *The Hindu* wrote that Syed Nazrul Islam proclaimed Bangladesh the Sovereign Democratic Republic at a public function in a mango grove on 17 April. Prof. Yusuf Ali read out the Proclamation in Bengali. Thousands of people and much of the world press witnessed the historical function. At the beginning of the ceremony, the acting President took the salute and inspected a guard of honour presented by a small detachment of the *Mukti Fauj* (Hindu 18 April 1971). On 24 April, Syed Nazrul Islam wrote a letter to the President of India requesting that he immediately recognize the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Habib, 2017, p.98).

DU ALUMNI IN THE PRB GOVERNMENT

The PRB government had six ministers and was divided into fifteen ministries and divisions. Everywhere, the number of DU alumni was notable. The government's structure was Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as President, Syed Nazrul Islam as Vice President, Tajuddin Ahmad as Prime Minister, Khondakar Mostaq Ahmad as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Law, and Parliamentary Affairs, M Mansur Ali as Minister of Finance, Industry, and Commerce, and AHM Qamaruzzaman as Minister of Home, civil supplies, Relief, Rehabilitation, and Agriculture. Four of them were alumni of DU.

Long before, the government had constructed ministries, an active secretariat, a Planning Commission, and other necessary organs for conducting the government's official business. The government was divided into 15 ministries and divisions (Uzzaman, 2017, p. 171). The alumni of DU were notable everywhere. For instance, in the secretariat of the PRB government, the most prominent alumni of DU were Dr. Farrukh Aziz Khan (Personal Secretary of

Tajuddin Ahmed), Hossain Toufique Imam (Cabinet Secretary), Nurul Qader Khan (Secretary of the Establishment Division), Khondaker Asaduzzaman (Secretary of Finance, Industry, and Commerce), S.A Samad (Secretary of Defence), Abdul Khaleque (Secretary of Home Affairs), Anwarul Haque Khan (Secretary of Information and Broadcasting), Saadat Hussain (Personal Secretary of Finance, Industry and Commerce Minister), Khasruzzaman Choudhury (Deputy Secretary of the Defence Ministry), Zamil Choudhury (Information director) of the Bangladesh Bank) (Islam, 2016, p.169).

Some other DU alumni who led the government included Abdul Mannan, Head of the Information, Broadcasting, and Film Division of the Government; Professor Mohammad Yusuf Ali, Chairman of the Youth Control Board, which was the apex body for the recruitment and training of freedom fighters; Barrister Amirul Islam, the Prime Minister's political advisor; and Muyeedul Hasan, Special Assistant to Tajuddin Ahmad (Anisuzzaman, 2021, p. 84). Moudud Ahmed served as Postmaster General, and Akbar Ali Khan worked in the Cabinet Division and Defence Ministry.

The PRB government formed a Planning Commission with eminent experts in the country. All the members of the planning commission were DU teachers. Such as:

Chairman:

Dr Muzaffar Ahmed (Political Science)

Members:

Dr. Mosarraf Hussain (Economics)

Dr. Anisuzzaman (Bengali)

Dr. Khan Sarwar Murshid (English)

Dr. Sadesh Ranjan Bosu (Economics)

Dr. Waziur Rahman (Education and Research) (Islam, 2016, p. 169)

The commission aimed to draft a short-term and long-term plan for how the PRB government could overcome the wartime crisis and reconstruct Bangladesh after the war. HT Imam said that the commission prepared a short-term and long-term plan for the PRB government. The main focus of the short-term plan was rehabilitation during wartime, and the long-term plan was reconstruction and economic development after the liberation of Bangladesh.

The PRB government had a diplomatic front. The alumni of DU played a dominant role in forming the diplomatic front and executing the government policy in India and abroad. Due to their activities, on the one hand, the PRB government received international support; on the other hand, the Pakistan government failed to get the desired assistance from their friends. On the Diplomatic Front, the prominent alumni of DU were K. M. Shahabuddin, Second Secretary- New Delhi; Amjadul Haq, Assistant Press Attaché- New Delhi; M. Hossain Ali, Chief of Bangladesh Mission-Kolkata, RI Chowdhury: First Secretary- Kolkata, Anwar Karim Chowdhury: Third Secretary- Kolkata, Kazi Nazrul Islam: Third secretary, Kolkata, AH Mahmood Ali: Vice-Consul at the Pakistan Consulate-New York. M. A. Muhith: Economic Counsellor-Washington

DC. Enayet Karim: Ministe-USA, Shah A. M. S. Kibria: Counsellor-USA, Syed Muazzem Ali: Third Secretary- Washington, Mohiuddin Ahmed: Third Secretary- UK, AFM Abul Fateh: Ambassador- Iraq, Waliur Rahman: Second Secretary-Berne, Mustafizur Rahman: Second Secretary- Kathmandu, Rahim: Third Secretary-Tokyo, Mohiuddin Ahmed Jaigirdar: Third Secretary-Lagos, Mohiuddin Ahmed: Acting Trade Commissioner Hongkong, A. Momin: Ambassador Buenos Aires (Islam, 2016, pp. 169-73). Some Bengali intellectuals also assisted the diplomats in promoting the cause of the Bangladesh Liberation War. They were Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury (Vice-Chancellor of DU), Rehman Sobhan (teacher of DU), and AR Mallick (alumni of DU and Vice-Chancellor of Chittagong University).

Many DU alumni were associated with the administration and performance of the *Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra* in Kolkata. For instance, Abdul Mannan was in charge of the Press, Publicity, Information, and Broadcasting Department of the PRB Government. Zillur Rahman was the advisor, Anwarul Haque Khan was Member Secretary of the Advisory Committee, Aminul Haque Badsha (Key Organiser), Ashfaqur Rahman (Programme Organiser), Abdullah-al- Farook (Programme Producer), Ali Zaker (English Programme Producer), Nasrin Ahmed Shilu (English News presenter), MR Akhtar Mukul (Charampatra), Continuous program, Syed Ali Ahsan, Asad Choudhury, Zahir Raihan, Abdul Gaffar Choudhury, Anisuzzaman, Gaziul Haque, Mahbub Talukdar, Muhammad Abu Zafar, Ghulam Murshid, Badrul Hasan, Rafik Nowshad, Mohammad Rafiq. Singer Apel Mahmood, Rathindranath Roy, Rupa Khan, Bulbul Mahlanbish, Shahid Mahmud, Dalia Nowshin (Islam, 2016, p. 169-73). All of them were alumni of DU.

The 26th session of the United Nations General Assembly was held in New York on 21 September 1971. The PRB government appointed a team of 16 members to attend the session. Justice Abu Sayed Chowdhury was selected as the team's chief (Dainik Agradoot, 22 September 1971). He was the vice-chancellor of DU (Rahman, 2011, p. 792). Among the other representatives, notable teachers and alumni of DU were Fakir Shahabuddin, Abdus Samad Azad, AR Mallik, Professor Rahman Sobhan, Professor Muzaffar Ahmed, SA Karim, AMA Muhith and AFM Abul Fateh (Islam, 2016, p. 170).

The PRB government had required a large amount of money to run the government. The government did not possess any source of income because it was a government-in-exile. They had to collect all the necessary cash with the assistance of Bengali people from the bank and treasury of the earlier government and through donations. HT Imam said the PBR government fund's primary source was the Pakistan government's bank and treasury. Following the PBR government decision, responsible Bengali officers collected their deposited money and sent it to the government. Evidence showed that DU alumni played a crucial role in collecting funds during the Liberation War. For instance, Dr Akbar Ali Khan sent around three crore taka to the PRB government through

Agartala. He was a sub-divisional officer of Habiganj during the war and collected all the money from the sub-divisional treasury. AFM Abul Fateh was a full ambassador to Iraq. He declared his allegiance to the PRB government on 21 August 1971 from London. Before leaving Bagdad, Fateh withdrew around 25000 pounds from the Pakistan Embassy Account and sent the money to the PRB Government in India with the assistance of the Indian ambassador (Chowdhury, 2020, pp. 92-93). M. Hossain Ali withdrew around 2-3 crore rupees from the American Bank account of the Pakistan government in Delhi with the help of Golok (Majumder, 1971). Under the leadership of Justice Abu Sayed Chowdhury, a vast amount of money was collected from the Bengali people in the UK. A two-day cultural program was organized during the war at Shanmukhananda Hall, Bombay, on behalf of *Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra*. Nineteen lakh rupees were collected from that cultural program and sent to Tajuddin Ahmad (Daily Sun, 18 December 2010). Akbar Ali Khan, AFM Abul Fateh, and M. Hossain Ali were DU alumni. Justice Abu Sayed Chowdhury was the Vice-Chancellor of DU. The influence of the DU alumni was much more significant in cultural organizations. All the collected money was sufficient to run the nine-month government.

CONCLUSION

The University of Dhaka played a vital role in creating a literate Bengali Muslim middle class in eastern Bengal before the partition of 1947. After the creation of Pakistan, they became more conscious regarding their rights and protested government policies and activities. Their anti-government activities created a Bengali nationalist group. They led the Bengali nationalist movement and involved the people through their demands and actions. Some of the alumni of DU played a vital role in forming the PRB government and functions. The PRB government was a democratic and the first lawful government of Bangladesh. The government also respected public opinion by taking oaths to the national and international communities. The purpose of the PRB government was to liberate Bangladesh. Evaluating the PRB government, it is rational to state that if the DU alumni had not taken the initiative, the PRB government would not have been constituted, and Bangladesh would not have been liberated. The DU alumni Tajuddin played a crucial role in the formation of the government, and many DU alumni assisted him in functioning the government. The government ran its activities on behalf of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Ajoy Roy said Nazrul Islam informed him that if Tajuddin did not lead, they could not fight in the Liberation War, and it would be difficult for them to get assistance from the Indian government (Roy, 1971). Ajoy Roy also said that if the PRB government had not been constituted, the Liberation War would not have been organized, and the Pakistani government could have quickly suppressed the resistance. Due to the government's initiative, organizing crores of people outside Bangladesh was possible. On the other hand, it was possible to unify the Bengali people inside Bangladesh after the mass killing and brutal oppression perpetuated by the Pakistani government. Finally, Bangladesh emerged as an independent country due to the activities of the PRB government, in which the DU alumni played a vital role.

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