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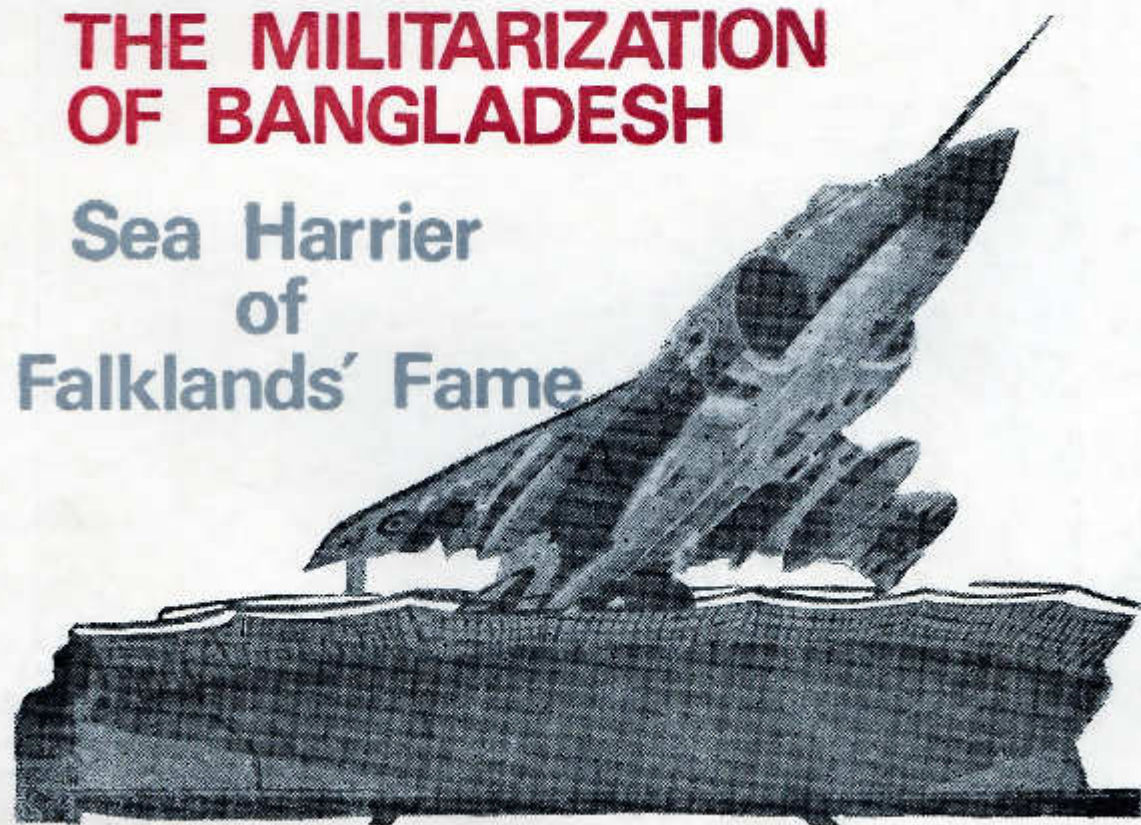
A MONTHLY MIRROR & DIGEST OF GEO-STRATEGIC AFFAIRS

Vol. VIII, No. 5, 1982



THE MILITARIZATION OF BANGLADESH

Sea Harrier
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Defence JOURNAL

A MONTHLY MIRROR & DIGEST OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Vol. VIII, No. 5, 1982

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The Militarization Of Bangladesh

Without martializing Bangladesh has militarized itself through a number of bloody coups and mutinies since its emergence. It has developed, in other words, the tradition of military intervention in civil affairs without acquiring the urge to martial or war-like prowess and adventurism. The very circumstance of its birth, marked by a blaze of violence and bloodshed, had portended the emergence of a martial or war-like state; but the native Bengali pacifism triumphed over the transient, war-bred guerrilla militancy and the overall civilian control of national affairs was presently restored. Months of fighting to the bitter end, however, seem to have left a tradition of resolving things by military means.

Perhaps, the happiest thing to happen in the new country had been the virtual extinction of militant organizations like the *Mukti Bahini* (The Liberation Army—an essentially bourgeois-nationalist rather than a revolutionary organization); and the raw and ruthless, para-military leaders like Brigadier (Tiger) Siddiqi—with an inordinate love for bloodspilling and chutzpah. The reckless abandon with which bludgeoned and bayoneted the so-called Pakistani collaborators (patriots by any standards in united Pakistan) for the benefit of the foreign press photographers, movie and TV camera crews, will always be recalled with a deep sense of horror. Thank God, this breed of adventurous freedom-fighters has disappeared saving the country from a prolonged spell of violent internal strife and possibly of civil war.

Ideally suited for guerrilla-type operations, Bangladesh, without adequate political control, that came to stay in spite of all the chinks in its armour, could have been thrown into the abyss of extreme lawlessness. The available Naxalite pattern of anarchist agitational politics, reinforced by battle-tested militants, could have served as a model for future operations entailing no end of trouble for the newly-born country. Fortunately, however, this was dropped in favour of controlled military interventions with limited violence and bloodshed.

It is quite remarkable how Bangladesh has managed to withstand and survive the numerous contradictions inherent in the very accident of its birth. Violence, once it is supposed to have outlived its utility against an external adversary, and is suddenly curbed by those in authority, tends to turn inwards often against erstwhile friends. It did happen in Bangladesh on a fairly large scale without over-spilling and contaminating the body-politic itself. A re-play of the Biafran or the Ethiopian or the Angolan or Cambodian

experience of prolonged internicine armed struggle would have been too much for the new country to withstand.

The martializing process, initiated by youngmen flocking to the ranks of the *Mukti Bahini*, was regulated and counter-balanced by the proper militarization of the militants—whether trained soldiers (deserters from the Pakistan Army) or raw converts to arms under the then prevailing mass hysteria. The armed forces took the situation in their hands to exclude any possibility of rival military or para-military organizations jockeying for power towards the attainment of mutually-antagonistic strategies and aims. Thus the control and regularization of rival militant groups was perhaps the greatest achievement of the Bangladesh armed forces. It was nothing short of a miracle that, in the vacuum following the withdrawal of the victorious Indian forces from Bangladesh, the insurgent elements at the peak of their martial power and glory were not allowed to take over. Instead, the armed forces under the overall command of General M.A.G. Osmany (a retired full colonel of the Pakistan Army) moved in to the exclusion of all the irregular militant groups. General Osmany, despite his full involvement and active participation in the guerrilla insurgency at the highest level of command (by virtue of his senior army rank as there were others like Major—later Major-General and President Zia-ur-Rahman—to challenge General Osmany's status in the *Mukti Bahini* hierarchy on the basis of merit and performance) retained his deeply-ingrained sense of military discipline and of relative detachment from politics. And it was just as well as during the early days of its emergence, Bangladesh could ill-afford any infighting between rival militant groups.

Shortly afterwards, however, a new irritable strain developed in the Bangladesh armed forces with the repatriation of the Bengali (formerly East Pakistani) units posted in (West) Pakistan. The bulk of these units had participated in the war on the western front, only half-heartedly though, at times even disloyally, as some of them en masse, and still others sporadically, deserted and crossed over to the other side of the border. There were two Bengali general officers Lt. General Khawaja Wasiuddin, Master General of Ordnance (MGO) at the General Headquarters (GHQ) and Major General Sikandrul (Bacchu) Karim commanding an armoured division, in one of the most sensitive sectors of the war. However, the armoured division, a key element of our striking force, though fully deployed was never committed along with the rest of that force.

In all there were some 28,000 men and officers, soldiers, sailors and airmen. Except for some rare exceptions (Colonel Abdul Qayyum of the Armoured Corps was one such among senior officers) every Bengali officer opted for, and was subsequently repatriated to Bangladesh in a remarkably smooth and trouble-free operation. The Pakistan Government and the GHQ could have, had they so wished, legitimately put on the mat several senior Bengali officers—brigadiers and colonels—in sensitive positions during the war for conduct unbecoming, but would not.

These officers and men were received with mixed feelings of relief by their kins and friends and of irritation by their professional colleagues in Bangladesh. The fact remained that all the Bengalis posted in (West) Pakistan had been LOBs (left out battle) and, in this sense at least, could not justifiably lay claim to the fruits of victory. They had two very strong factors in their favour, however. First and foremost was the identical circumstance of the absence of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman, the supreme leader and the father of the

nation, from the armed struggle waged with the help of the Indian forces. Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman in remote Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) in the Punjab was facing a court martial for waging another kind of war against the state of Pakistan, of which he was a citizen as well as the leader of the country's majority political party, outlawed in the wake of its open rebellion and revolt against the state and the forcible seizure of the apparatus of the provincial government.

The other major factor in favour of the repatriates was their professional excellence and experience sorely needed by the fledgling armed forces. The type of battle experience the locally-based forces had imbibed during the insurgency under the overall operational control of India's Eastern command (from whose area they had been conducting their operations) had not only lost their relevance to the character and spirit of a regular national military establishment but also posed a potential threat to its development on sound professional lines. After necessary investigation and screening, most of them were absorbed, but several others, notably the two general officers—Wasiuddin and 'Bacchu' Karim were honourably retired. General Wasiuddin was re-employed in the foreign service (where he still, most probably, is) while General Karim took to private business enterprise and is reported to have been thriving. There was a press report of the appointment of one retired General Sikandrul Karim (in all likelihood 'Bacchu') as adviser to General Ershad followed by another report of his resignation.

The two major elements in the Bangladesh armed forces had a somewhat uneasy co-existence failing to achieve the fusion and camaraderie for which professional armies are often noted. The case of Air Vice Marshal Tawwab (a retired PAF Group Captain—a repatriate and an LOB) is symptomatic of the divergence between the locally-based, *Mukti Bahini*-oriented and the Pakistan-based elements of the Bangladesh armed forces. The Group Captain, who had resigned his commission in Pakistan was promoted Air Vice Marshal and most probably (please correct me if I am wrong) the first chief of staff of Bangladesh Air Force. Subsequently he fell out of grace and migrated to West Germany where he still lives with his German wife.

Since independence, the Bangladesh armed forces have not been battle-tested and yet bloodied thrice in military coups and mutinies. To an outside observer, without the benefit of authoritative information, it appears that, the militant strain into the Bangladesh armed forces has entered via the ex-*Mukti Bahinis* rather than the repatriates by and large, better-disciplined and trained and organized. It also appears that the *Mukti-Bahini* style of violence as seen in Bangladesh's military coups and the cold-blooded murder of President Major-General Zia-ur-Rahman followed by the murder, in mysterious circumstances, of Major-General Manzoor, (the key figure in the President's assassination) is now giving way to better and more organized ways of government take-over and management.

To Lieut-Gen. Hossain Mohammad Ershad goes the twin distinction of staging the first bloodless and forthright coup in Bangladesh. The coup held no element of surprise for anyone even casually following the various developments in Bangladesh ever since the assassination of President Maj.-Gen. Ziaur Rahman on May 31, 1981. Gen. Ershad never made a secret of his contention that in view of repeated civilian failure his army had to have a greater role to play in national affairs.

In this way alone, he believed and reasoned, could the armed forces be prevented from having to intervene in civil affairs every now and then.

In a key-note interview to *The Guardian*, London, (See under *Documentation*) in October last (about a month after the hanging of 12 officers involved in the murder of President Ziaur Rahman and just a little over a month before the general elections in the third week of November) Gen. Ershad demanded a 'constitutional' role for the military in the country's affairs.

He said: "In a developing nation, the army does play a very high role in the stability of the country. To stop further coups, if the army participates in the administration of the country, then they will probably have a feeling they are also involved and they will not be frustrated."

A more unambiguous declaration of intent on the part of a serving chief of staff would be hard to come by in the history books of military takeovers—normally super-secret Byzantine affairs—palace conspiracies bristling with elements of high drama.

Gen. Ershad first showed his mettle when, in an order of the day, on Sept. 7, he chose to challenge the supremacy of the High Courts or the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, at that time, considering petitions of the condemned officers to rule that they had jurisdiction over the fate of those tried and sentenced by the secret court martial.

Gen. Ershad said: "I want to assert again that we consider it against our Constitution that a matter concerning military affairs should be dragged into the High Court, and we consider it also a threat to the discipline of the armed forces. We really hope that the law will take its own course. I would like to tell our soldiers in all ranks that the sentences given by the court martial will be implemented. Let there be no doubt or suspicion about it."

A more blunt statement by a chief of staff, still without the umbrella of martial law, calling in question the competence of the highest judicial and legal forum of the land vis-a-vis the armed forces, can hardly be imagined.

The vital question that remains unanswered as yet is why the civilian authorities, executive and judicial, did not take note of Gen. Ershad's ostensibly calculated impertinence and proceeded to relieve him of his command and place him on the retired list instantly without assigning reasons. On the contrary, the executive as well as the judiciary gulped it all without wincing. After such a pathetic display of civilian passivity and tolerance to threatening insubordination, military intervention would be only a question of time.

Through ten whole months—between May 31, 1981 (assassination of Gen. Ziaur Rahman) and March 25, 1982 (imposition of martial law) Gen. Ershad had provided enough grounds for drastic executive action against him. But he was not even given a mild reprimand for all we know. Even after the general elections on November 15, 1981, which confirmed the incumbent president, Mr. Abdus Sattar (a man of Gen. Ershad's own choosing) in office, the army Chief of Staff went on pressing for direct military participation in national affairs. The President, reduced to mere figurehead, despite his huge electoral victory, made one move after another, to appease the military but even the maximum was

not enough for the army chief. He would not even accept the military dominated national security council including heads of the three Services, and branded it as "a body not acceptable to us as it will not meet our demands and aspirations."

That was barely a few weeks before he imposed his martial law not so much in defiance of the civilian authority as in default of it. Gen. Ershad had put his civilian masters to the test and found that they were all men of straw.

Now the big question is whether Gen. Ershad's martial law is going to hold. In his October interview to *The Guardian*, Gen. Ershad said that he had discussed the Turkish pattern of military participation in civil affairs with the late President Zia. "But ultimately we discarded it...we are a different nation. Our people are politically very very conscious. I should say, it is a volatile nation."

Traditionally also, Bangladesh has been resistant to hero-worship, very particularly in the military field. Gen. M.A.G. Osmany, Brigadier (Tiger) Siddiqi and Maj-Gen. Ziaur Rahman, among many others, had been in the vanguard of their armed struggle in 1971 and none of them has been enshrined in the popular folk-lore or imagination. The tragic fate that overtook Gen. Ziaur Rahman is too well-known; and Gen. Osmany and Brig. (Tiger) Siddiqi, though still alive, are hardly having an easy time, not to speak of mass adulation in their country.

More or less the same thing goes for political leaders, and after what happened to the Banga Bandha Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Father of the Nation, let there be no allusions left about any political myth-making and hero-worship in Bangladesh.

The Bengalis, as Gen. Ershad said, are indeed a 'volatile' people committed more to the land than to the leaders that come and go. Besides, they do not seem to have the same loyalist tradition that we have here in Pakistan. This is particularly true of the Bangladesh military establishment that has been through four military coups in eleven years of which only one has been bloodless. Gen. Ershad would do well always to bear in mind this facet of his countrymen's psyche. Be they civilians or soldiers, Bengalis, as a whole, are impatient of authoritarianism; and Gen. Ershad would have to move pretty fast if he does not wish to be overtaken by the fate of his predecessors.

Possibilities of internal conflict within the military establishment itself as well as public strife cannot be ruled out. For a nation born in armed insurgency and put through three bloody mutinies and coups, it would be nothing new to take up arms when they have to. According to Gen. Ershad himself "Martial law is never the answer... The army's role is different from running an administration. If you get involved in this, ultimately you destroy the army."

As an ex-Pakistan army officer returning to his country after it had been already made, General Ershad could not have been unfamiliar with the interventionist Ayubian legacy in respect of civil and national affairs. Much as the Bengalis showed a horror of martial law in united Pakistan, they had been, quite evidently, imbibing the Ayubian tradition only envying their West Pakistani brethren, dominating the armed forces, for using and enforcing it in actual practice. Even under Pakistani martial law, Bengali officers,

engaged in martial law duties, seemed to relish their job contrary to their overt and generally-accepted aversion to it. As brigadier in-charge civil affairs (Brig Civ.) at, HQ CMLA, General 'Bacchu' Karim, had been in the highest policy-making echelons, contributing his full share towards imposing and enforcing martial law. And there were several others senior Bengali officers (Brigadier Majid, brigadier martial law in Dacca itself) performing martial law duties satisfactorily and willingly.

To the shared Ayubian legacy has been added another and more positive factor, the Islamic orientation of the General Ershad's regime coming very close to the irrevocable commitment of General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq's government to the establishment of the Islamic order in Pakistan. It is evident that Bangladesh has come a long way from the secularism of the earlier days to its present-day non-secularism and return to the Islamic ideology as the integral part of statecraft. The phenomenon must be thoroughly examined and analysed to find out if on the common pillars of martial law and Islamic ideology a super-structure of sympathetic understanding and co-operation could be raised between parted twain.

The militarization of the non-martial Bangladesh has been new and intriguing phenomenon in the affairs of the subcontinent. Rather than turn up one's nose at it a serious effort be made to understand and evaluate it in the context of the overall internal security climate of the subcontinent.

It is also the time for the Indian leaders, smug in the belief of the strength and durability of their democratic tradition and order, to stop and think about the future role of their armed forces in the conduct of their national affairs.

—Brigadier Abdul Rahman Siddiqi (Retd)

Martial Law In Bangladesh

A Selective Chronology

Compiled By

Ekramul Haque

Dacca, October 10. The Bangladesh Army Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. H.M. Ershad has asked the politicians to think about making some important constitutional changes under which the Armed Forces could play an effective role in the national affairs. This, according to Ershad, would ward off the future coup attempts.

November 21. Gen. Ershad said today that there was deep sense of deprivation in the nation's armed forces, and reiterated that they be given a role in running the country. According to him, the assassinations of Mujib-ur Rahman and later Zia-ur Rahman in a mutiny last May, were "results of deprivation." He said Bangladesh's defence forces were cohesive and disciplined today adding: "Insha Allah (God willing), we shall not see another military upheaval in the foreseeable future." He also said the army was happy at the election of Mr. Sattar as President to succeed late Zia-ur-Rahman.

December 23. President Abdus Sattar yesterday called on the armed forces to help "consolidate our achievement and prepare for the future by shouldering in-

creased responsibility for building the nation."

December 26. Bangladesh is likely to have a four or five-member National Security Council which will include the three Services chiefs and will have wide powers. Apparently, this is being done to satisfy the demands made by Lt. Gen. Ershad for the Army's active participation in the governance of the state. Two days earlier Ershad said that a nation that neglected its soldiers could not achieve anything great.

January 1. The Bangladesh Government set up a powerful National Security Council to explore ways and means of ensuring participation of the armed forces in the country's socio-economic development. The new council replaces the National Defence Council which dealt only with security matters and defence arrangements. The new council includes heads of the three Services, country's Vice President, Prime Minister and Ministers of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Industries and Finance.

January 4. Gen. Osmani, a Bangladesh political party leader and former Chief of

Staff of the country's armed forces, strongly criticised the demands of Lt. Gen. Ershad for the Army's wider role in the country's affairs saying he was setting a deplorable tradition by entering into politics in uniform.

January 5. The Bangladesh Armed Forces have told the Government they do not accept the newly-formed National Security Council. Last week Lt. Gen. Ershad in an interview said the "council is not relevant to our demands and aspirations." Asked what he had in mind and in what form the Council would have been acceptable to him the General said: "You will know everything in due time."

January 17. President Sattar has denied suggestions that the recently-formed 10-man National Security Council would give the Bangladesh Armed Forces a clear role in deciding fundamental national issues. "The Council will not take over as the supreme decision-making body, it will simply have an advisory role," Mr. Sattar said.

January 28. President Abdus Sattar today inaugurated a new Parliament building saying Bangladesh would never go back to the monolithic or other system from the current presidential form of democracy.

February 11. Bangladesh President Sattar dissolved the 41-member cabinet tonight and said the decision followed a serious national crisis.

February 12. A new 18-member Cabinet was sworn in today by Bangladesh President Sattar. The Government today ordered an immediate probe into allegations of corruption against Ministers who were sacked by the President.

February 26. The National Security Council came under heavy fire in the Bangladesh

Parliament today, the opposition staging a walkout against the speakers decision not to have any debate on the issue.

March 2. Bangladesh Premier Shah Azizur Rahman allayed fears expressed by opposition deputies in the parliament that Martial Law would soon be declared in the country. He said such fears were unfounded and the civilian government had perfect understanding with the Armed Forces.

March 24. Bangladesh army strongman Lt.-Gen. Hossain Mohammed Ershad seized power today in a pre-dawn military coup and said he had taken over because of corruption in public life and power struggle in the ruling party.

The Bangladesh Radio said night curfew had been imposed in Dacca and other cities and all political activities, processions, strikes and public meetings had been banned for the duration of Martial Law.

March 25. Army units in armoured cars had moved in and occupied all key administrative buildings and communication centres in Dacca.

Gen. Ershad's broadcast on radio and TV, in sharp contrast to the scenes of jubilation when Gen. Zia-ur Rahman had staged the coup, was heard by the people with apathy and most bazars had immediately closed down.

Dacca Radio gave no report about President Sattar and the members of his Cabinet. The AIR, however, said that Sattar and his Cabinet men were under house arrest.

Bangladesh remained quiet as the new military government issued a series of decrees investing it with sweeping powers.

A later news said that neither Sattar nor premier Shah Aziz-ur-Rahman were under arrest. Those arrested include Finance Minister, Commerce Minister, and a pro-Moscow "Ekota" party leader Surajit Sen gupta as was a former chairman of the Freedom Fighters Organisation.

March 26. Abul Fazal Mohammad Ahsanuddin Chowdhury, a retired judge of the Bangladesh Supreme Court, was today named President by Lt-Gen. Mohammed Ershad.

The authorities said 215 had so far been arrested for alleged corruption and misuse of official power.

March 27. Hossain Ershad said today that he planned keeping Martial Law in the country for the next two years.

"My time frame is two years. If we meet our objectives we will go back to the barracks"—the Gen. said. Ahsanuddin was sworn in as President.

March 28. Five former Ministers have been ordered to report to the Martial Law authorities immediately or face action. The Mayor of Dacca Mr. Hasnat was arrested by the authorities.

March 30. Bangladesh new President Ahsanuddin Chowdhury yesterday called on the nation to cooperate with the Martial Law authorities in stamping out corruption in the country.

April 1. Ershad today set up a special tribunal to try offences under Martial Law. The five-member tribunal, with powers to deliver death sentences will be headed by Brigadier Moshahed Chowdhury.

April 4. The military government has formed five more special military courts to

try former ministers and officials arrested on charges of corruption, abuse of office power and anti-state activities. Ershad today also set up 23 Summary Martial Law courts and ordered ban on all student unions in the country.

April 6. Authorities disclosed that they have also established 23 lower summary courts to firmly enforce rules of Martial Law government.

April 7. Ershad sacked seven civil servants in an apparent purge of the administration.

April 8. The military tribunal has started hearing of the case of former Deputy P.M. Mr. Jamaluddin Ahmed. Gen. Ershad reiterated that the Bangladesh Armed Forces have no lust for power and they would set an example by transferring power to civilians.

April 9. Seven top officials were dismissed from their jobs by the Martial Law authorities. In an austerity campaign the Bangladesh government reduced the number of ministers to 17 from 41.

April 12. The new government has dissolved a 53-member pool of envoys formed by assassinated President Zia-ur-Rahman two years ago.

Through a new Martial Law Order (MLO), Gen. Ershad took over officially all executive and legislative powers in his hands. The new order empowers him to make any law which will have the same force as an act of Parliament.

April 15. Bangladesh martial law authorities have recalled 22 senior diplomats and downgraded foreign missions to charge d'affaires level in an apparent move to re-organise the Foreign Ministry.

April 16. Bangladesh's former Deputy P.M. Jamaluddin Ahmed was today sentenced by a special Martial Law tribunal to "rigorous imprisonment till the rising of the court" and fined Taka 3,50,000 for corruption and criminal misconduct. The Martial Law authorities ordered all high-ranking govt. and semi-govt. officials to submit detailed particulars of their sons and daughters studying abroad and the means of financing their studies.

April 18. The govt. today sacked 18 senior officials and recalled 15 envoys as part of reshuffling the staff.

April 23. The govt. will hold elections of village union councils coming November as the first step towards setting up locally-elected body in the country.

April 29. A second Martial Law tribunal has been set up in Bangladesh to try former Cabinet Ministers and politicians on charges of corruption.

April 30. Bangladesh former Deputy Premier Mr. Jamaluddin Ahmed was sentenced here today to seven years rigorous imprisonment and fined about 50,000 dollars on charges of corruption and misuse of official power for personal gains. Of his 11

co-accused, two were sentenced to four and two years terms respectively and fined another 40,000 dollars. The remaining nine were acquitted on the occasion of the Bengali New Year's day.

May 10. Ershad on Sunday night called for forging unity between the Armed Forces and the people wage a relentless struggle to achieve economic emancipation of the masses, ensure social justice, establish rule of law and promote welfare of the common man.

May 12. A military court yesterday sentenced a former Deputy Director of National Intelligence Service (NIS) to seven years' rigorous imprisonment for patronising several private brothels in Dacca.

May 13. A special military court sentenced to death four persons belonging to the Youth Front of the former ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party on charge of murder. This is the first time that death sentences were awarded by Martial Law court under the present government.

May 14. Gen. Ershad has decided to solicit public opinion for his steps towards the administrative reorganisation.

Martial Law In Bangladesh

M. B. Naqvi

Gen. Hussain Mohammad Ershad, the Bangladesh army chief, took over the country's government almost in slow motion. He and his other generals had been signalling their intention for months; it was even more widely expected than the first military takeover in the original Pakistan (1958). Gen. Ershad went so far as to inform the US, Britain, India and Pakistan long before the zero hour and, apparently, no one discouraged him strongly or seriously enough.

After proclaiming their Martial Law (ML) Gen. Ershad and his colleagues are going about their business as if it were twenty four years ago: there are vigorous cleanliness and punctuality drives; rooting out corruption from bureaucracy and cleansing the public life; accounts underlining how bad, corrupt and inefficient the politicians were. Bureaucracy is being steadily infiltrated by uniformed personnel, whether serving or retired; there is the same expression of regret about the reluctance to seize power for its own sake; and, of course, the faith in real democracy and popular government continues to be asserted and a restoration of representative government is promised "as soon as possible".

The only thing new is, apart from the political background of Bangladesh in the first few months of 1982, the proffered rationale by the new CMLA-President: If he and his generals had not moved when and how they did, everyone would have had a revolt by the Jawans and the subalterns on his hands; his army is a factor in the political life of the country and without a constitutional role it would not be satisfied.

Views expressed by the writer are not necessarily those of Defence Journal.

It all looks like a revival of the old F.M. Ayub Khan play, with only minor updating of the script. The elements of familiarity however, should not breed contempt; it is a

deadly serious matter, at least for the Bangladesh people. So far, one has not mentioned the people all the 90 million of them, as if they do not count. It would be a

mistake to ignore them. No one can forget their decisive involvement in politics of the last two years of united Pakistan and their role in the 1971 civil war. That spurt of activity had come after the inactivity, disunity and frustrations of nearly a decade and a half, including that costly fraud of the Decade of Development that finally destroyed even the possibility of national unity. There is no reason to suppose the people of that unhappy land will not again, one day, finding they have been cheated out of their hopes of independent Bangladesh, the Sonar Bangla, rise in revolt. That could be a ferocious tidal wave. This is an ever present possibility—indeed likelihood. When that may happen is anybody's guess. But until then, the politicians, in and out of uniform, can have a free run of the place.

Background. When one talks of the background to this recent development in the Bangladesh politics, one should keep the trauma of the 1971 in view. That was a true civil war and that presupposes two sides. In this case, it is all too readily forgotten that the losing side did not merely comprise the "West Pakistani" Army or the Biharis. There were many Muslim Bengalis who took both the religious bond and Pakistan's unity seriously and they were apprehensive of the rising tide of Bengali nationalism. Since the regime that stood for national unity and talked incessantly of Islam was autocratic and had no legs to stand on in its refusal to do what it had promised, the Bengali Muslim opponents of the Bengali nationalism stayed quiet and politically inactive. In any case, it would have been odd for them actively to side with the military in a situation of its confrontation with the inflamed Bengali nationalist opinion, represented by the Awami League (AL) of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, especially when the power-drunk generals were manifestly in the wrong and were refusing to make over power to popular representa-

tives of Pakistan. Few could then stand up and be counted for Pakistani nationalism in that fouled up situation (in East Pakistan). But they were very much there.

We now have the benefit of the hindsight. Most of the troubles in Bangladesh, after its independence, seem attributable to the conflict in the body-politic between these two, separate strands: Bengali nationalism of Awami League type and the 'traditional' rightwing belief in Islam providing the chief political identification mark. No one has been able to resolve this conflict; it continues to divide Bangladesh Muslims. It is obvious the partisans of neither school is able to be either intellectually self-confident or single-minded enough or capable of carrying all the people with it. Simply put, the inadequacy of either is obvious: if Bengali language and culture are the main political attributes to describe, sustain and give identity to the people of Bangladesh, how can anyone in reason exclude the Hindus of Bangladesh, all the West Bengalis and the Bengali-speaking people elsewhere in eastern India. It seems an entirely secular Bengali nationalism that rises above the old religious divide and does not command automatic allegiance of all Bangladeshi Muslims. At the other end, if like Pakistan, Islam is to continue to provide the basis of identity and unifying principle for the Bangladesh nationalism, or whatever its political credo is to be called, the question arises: why was Pakistan broken up? If the Islamic bond was indeed as basic, surely some accommodation with West Pakistanis, despite their majority's proclivity to love a military rule and to identify with it, would have been possible. At any rate, if that was not possible in the past, it can be worked for now. Once it is put like this and the political absurdity of the statement becomes immediately obvious; not many common Muslim Bangladeshis can contemplate any vital link with West

Pakistan. In a manner of speaking, the soul of Bangladesh is torn between two strong forces: Bengali language and culture pull in one direction and Islamic pulls in another. None appears capable of vanquishing the other and the people of Bangladesh flinch from pushing either force to its logical limit.

The stark facts of social and economic life put severe limits on all the social or political forces. Paucity of resources in comparison to population and the relative backwardness help intensify the politics of incoherent, and often illiterate, agitation and pervasive restiveness.

Gen. Zia And After. The initial AL regime, despite the phenomenal popularity of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his party, lasted less than four years before it was overthrown in a bloody mutiny-cum-coup d'état it had become quite unpopular largely on the grounds of its corruption. No point in recounting the melancholy tally of coups and mutinies since. At length, Gen. Ziaur Rahman was able to consolidate his rule after considerable number of not-much-publicised hangings of soldiers and other repressions. He built a political party that was remarkably similar to AL and indeed PML of Ayub Khan-Monem Khan era. For the matter of that, it was grand daughter of the old Muslim League. Often even the people were the same. Each of the main Bangladesh regimes became unpopular due to two simple factors: failure to deliver in terms of popular expectations and the prevalence of corruption. It is true, the earlier corruption under the very nose of the Bango Bandhu was felt to be more shocking and intolerable.

After Zia was gunned down, every one saw the generals' menacing shadow over the frail interim regime of Justice Abdus Sattar. When the army-supported elec-

tions took place and Justice Sattar became an elected President, the shadow of the generals lengthened and indeed it became voluble. The corruption may well have increased by some unknowable factor but none of it was new. In fact, it is possible to make two glib generalisations: real improvement in the living conditions of a majority of Bangladesh population requires waging a grim revolutionary struggle by a regime that has grown from the roots upward around a workable philosophy of development. Middle class parties, or what passes for middle classes there, like simply cannot deliver anything noticeable in a politically feasible span of say three or four years. Secondly, corruption is embedded in the subcontinent's social and political life. It can perhaps be kept in check and minimised by a vigorously functioning democracy. But if there is a regime that has to retreat from democratic norms and wishes to survive as such has no option but to promote corruption. That is the only way to rope in the political notables for managing the affairs of villages or small towns; (the larger towns, being open political arenas where survival for such a regime requires a lot of money and numerous goonda-like activists, are another matter). But all this is another name for even more blatant corruption.

Plain democracy in a country like Bangladesh presupposes the readiness of the social and political elites to live with what ever the awesome majesty of King Demos may decree. Since it is apt to veer towards radical reforms, the elites tend to distrust and hate democracy. Moreover, the provenance and the manner of the elites' birth, as also their daily operations, condition their behaviour. If so, the question to be asked is: What kind of people constitute the elites in Bangladesh Landed aristocracy does not exist but smallish

"larger landowners"—men with five acres upwards—are powerful in the countryside and the successors to Ayub Khan's Works Programme, with their growing funds for local development, offer a booty over which such powerful people can contend. That has been the substance of party politics since Monem Khan's days. This gentry provides the ruling and main opposition parties. The rest of the political spectrum comprises city-based parties that must have money to operate. Where can they get it, except when any of their leaders is in power? There are no powerful capitalists to finance large parties, though on a minor scale this does go on. Money for party politics is the biggest source of corruption and which explains why ruling parties quickly become large, rich and goonda-like; this happened to the original Muslim League, and Bangladesh National Party (BNP). It also explains the weakness of those outside the citadel of power; they quickly become pale shadows of their previous selves. Eradicating corruption in a land of scarce resources and overpopulation can only be a long-term process, attainable perhaps with the help of a revolutionary change in the living conditions.

No Easy Exit From Corruption. When people superciliously talk of too many bloody coups in a mere 10 year span of life and of too much blood-letting, they can usefully keep these facts in focus. The authoritarian way-out of this morass, as the Ziaur regime's end or the experience of earlier military regimes in Pakistan shows, that retreat from democratic practice, instead of reducing corruption, takes it to new heights, often involving a quantum jump into greater exploitation of the people. Violence in successions to non-democratic regimes is inherent; it can be implicit by way of its threat or it can be explicit. It is not something

special to the so-called conditions simply dictating such things. But the peculiarities of the coup of March 24, 1982 have also to be looked into.

Since November 1981 when President Sattar became an elected President and formed his government, the Bangladesh Army did not conceal its ambition. One cannot ignore the hundred and one indications—most of them found their way into newspapers—the generals were constantly weighing the pros and cons of taking over ever since Gen. Ziaur Rahman was murdered in May 1981 in Chittagong. But after the elections the President felt strong enough to offer some resistance to the generals: He at first refused to hear of their demand for a supreme National Security Council—over and above the government—on which to generals should sit. Later, he succumbed to their pressure and formed just such a Council. But the generals were not satisfied since they did not have a clear-cut majority in it. They showed their dissatisfaction in public. President Sattar panicked. Then, in February 1982 they forced him to sack his own recently-formed government and appoint a new and supposedly cleaner cabinet, doubtless with a view to gaining army's acceptance. But in just a month, the army chief, after due notification to four foreign powers, delivered his coup de main and sent the whole elected apparatus of government packing. Not unnaturally, no one was surprised, though most well wishers of Bangladesh were saddened by it.

No fair-minded man can say Gen. Ershad has been able to make a convincing case for his takeover or that President Sattar's rule in the three months he was in power—the last two of which were clearly spent in a state of crisis with the generals breathing down his neck and spine—was glaringly more corrupt than

his predecessors. As for the threat of young officers' and *Jawans'* revolt, that is more a case of generals' inefficiency, if not worse.

Army and The Nation. However, the question is: how is the Army regime to do the much-needed nation-building? The nation is sadly divided, as the aftermath of November 1981 presidential elections showed. Call it secular versus non-secular or left versus right, the polarisation is an ominous fact of life. In the countryside, the conditions had been, even during Gen. Zia's period, chaotic. Political murders in the villages were the order of the day and the issue was the division of the loot: funds for local development. No doubt the AL regime (1972-75) set the pattern for a lot of new corruption. But much of it was occasioned by the combination of circumstances: the fluid social structure (quite unlike that of today's Pakistan), the spiritual crisis resulting from the uncertainty over national identity, inherently bad economic situation and the like. These have continued and are still operative. The philosophy of making the trains run on time goes only so far—indeed so far as to be unnoticeable in a country like Bangladesh. Gen. Ershad regime seems to show no awareness of what it is up against or how it has to tackle the gigantic tasks of either uniting the nation and giving its political life a new orientation; or of initiating a process of development that will actually take hold at the grassroots, especially in the countryside where most of the ninety millions of Bangladeshis live. In fact, how different can the Ershad regime be from, say President Sattar's? As it was, the basic underpinning of the Sattar's position vis-a-vis the challenge from Hasina Wajid-led Awame League (AL) was provided by the Army. His acquiring a popular mandate could have brought in an element of

stability. This whole facade is gone, making the Army's task—a task it has assumed by its own volition—more difficult.

There is no reason to doubt the personal bonafides of Gen. H.M. Ershad or his sincerity in making the various promises of returning power to the people "as soon as possible". However, these promises are easily made by a general. Their fulfilment is never easy. Advancing in the political field is particularly more hazardous, for no line of retreat can be kept open, as all generals have discovered throughout the Third World. What will he do?

If the Bangladesh people try and hold Ershad to his promises of restoring unfettered democracy, it would be to no one's surprise. How can he fulfil this particular promise? One thing that is almost wholly irrelevant is the personal honesty of an Army Chief who takes over his country. True, people tend to think in terms of honesty of purpose of such a ruler in quite personal terms. But it is really a question of political science, of the mechanisms through which this can or cannot be done. There are two ways of looking at the problem: One is academic that seeks to discover the precise processes that can come in the way of redeeming such a pledge. The second is looking at the various instances of ML regimes trying to end themselves and make democracy succeed themselves. It would be instructive to examine both lines of approach.

Anatomy Of Martial Law. To begin with, it is illogical to expect any regime, once it comes into being to try hard to kill itself; human beings are not made that way. But this is not a decisive argument, for personal commitment to ideals and outside pressures might in some circumstances be decisive. But a closer

look at the phenomenon called martial law and its *modus operandi* should yield interesting pointers. We have already seen how this particular ML was for so long and so audibly in the making. Its origins, from a functional standpoint, lay in the climate of opinion in a particular professional group, viz. the army's officer corps. Again from a functional viewpoint, a regime like this means duplicating a sizeable part of the executive apparatus of the government. There is a military administrator at all district and presumably even thana level, with a separate framework of command and communications. Then, there are the military courts, with all the paraphernalia of presiding officers, prosecuting and defending officers, clerks of the courts and the train of record keepers, drivers, peons etc. A large number of military personnel are thus involved in direct civilian duties. Military personnel assigned to civilian duties are armed with special powers to arrest a citizen on a suspicion of "intending to commit an offence" under innumerable Martial Law Regulations (MLRs) and Martial Law Orders (MLOs).

Then, there is the further consideration about legal liability. Primarily, it issues from two incompatible legal systems. The normal civil law gets subordinated and largely substituted by the military commander's orders that in most cases transgress the limits of the ordinary laws of the land. While a martial law government lasts no difficulty is encountered; all the commands of a military authority, the MLRs and MLOs etc., have the force of law. But what happens when it ends? The classic theory about ML regimes being followed by Indemnity Acts, condoning all transgressions of law by uniformed personnel during their life offers only limited help and guidance. For one thing, it merely covers those cases where competent civil authority calls in the army and safeguards it when it

returns to barracks: by a status no such cover is available to what is a putsch or coup d'etat. Ending of a ML, like the one being discussed, means handing over power to either an elected Assembly or some other body of men acting as representatives of people. How would such a body behave after the army has relinquished power? Would it protect the soldiers who meted out rough-and-ready justice to civilians during the military's rule almost all of which judgements would be sure to violate one or more laws of the land?

Courts in future may want to redress the accumulated grievances against uniformed functionaries acting arbitrarily. More so, if national opinion happens to be sharply divided over the justification of the take-over and on the assessment of the military's conduct while in power. If the officers corps in the armed forces begins to fear that the future civilian authority might not protect their policies, actions or judgements of the martial law period, all the concerned personnel would endeavour to prevent a civilian successor authority from emerging. In such cases as Bangladesh's ML, the only time when the armed forces would welcome a successor civilian regime would be when, at least, the latter is sure to protect them retrospectively and, if possible, preserve as many as possible of the perks and advantages they enjoyed during Martial Law. The models are ready at hand for Gen. Ershad's men Gen. Ayub Khan's and Gen. Zia-ur-Rahman's civilian regimes after their respective MLs. Gen. Ershad may be forced either to tread this well-trodden path or would be forced to think of almost impossible alternatives, including the prolonging of his ML indefinitely.

ML In Bangladesh. The second line of approach has in fact been hinted at. This is to look for precedents elsewhere. The

examples nearer home would be, naturally enough, more relevant. Nearest examples are those of Pakistan, of course; conditions in Burma are altogether too alien and strange. It would be needless pedantry to concern oneself with African or Latin American military dictatorships. The lessons from Pakistani examples are quite unequivocal. There are three clear instances: 1958, 1969 and 1977. The similarity of 1958 experience to what happened in Bangladesh early in 1982 is striking. The 1969 and 1977 cases do not quite apply. Despite the AL's undoubted popularity, especially of the Hasina Wajid-Kamal Hossain leadership, and its agitation, there are important reasons why it has not been able to defeat, much less destroy the BNP. For one thing, both parties are too similar in social origins and aspirations; in fact, they are chips off the old block. Moreover, the AL will probably take longer to wash off the blame it earned while in power between 1972 and 1975. For the present, its challenge is less credible because the army's guns look more formidable in a short-term sense—more so as the more militant AL activists of 1969-71 period and ex-Mukti Bahini elements are now outside it, mostly in the JSD or National Socialist Party. The BNP has, until recently, continued to enjoy army's support, of course. Isolation of the ruling party, especially the withdrawal of the army's support, would appear to be the reason for a decisive defeat of Ayub Khan's PML in 1969 and the PPP in 1977. It would thus seem the 1958 coup by Gen. Ayub Khan is the closest example. And Gen. Ershad has, like Ayub Khan, overthrown a whole more or less functioning civilian and democratic structure.

The other two Pakistani instances—of Gen. Yahya Khan's and Gen. Zia-ul-Haq's—, as noted, are less instructive. In the latter case, the denouement is not yet;

nor do we know which way will this ML finally jump. As for the controversial Gen. Yahya Khan's experiments with overthrowing an unpopular regime and trying to hand over to a representative Assembly, one thing stands out: He failed. The transfer did not take place because the officers corps of the Pakistani Army refused to rely on a Mujib-dominated Assembly. While this may well contain some lessons for Gen. Ershad, the applicability of this model might not be obvious to many in Bangladesh, mostly because of emotional overtones of the period. One hesitates but Gen. Ershad can do worse than to study an interview published by the Lahore magazine Urdu Digest's October 1977 issue. It was by Gen. Rao Farman Ali. His would also be a controversial name in Bangladesh; but that is no reason why the crystal-like clarity of his thought should not be appreciated. He has almost written a handbook for a would-be-Chief Martial Law-Administrator wishing to make over power to popular representatives.

Difficulties Ahead. If there is an Asian country where a Left-Right polarisation can take a really ugly turn, it is Bangladesh. Indeed, more so than Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the like. Nowhere else are things as bad and the stakes higher. Bangladesh can be a catalyst for the whole South Asian region (which does not preempt others, like Pakistan, from claiming this honour). In simpler words, it boils down to tremendous ideological pressures in the body-politic. No doubt, the political sophistication of the Bangladesh people is among the highest in Asia and many a keen mind is engaged in defusing the situation or keeping it so defused. But the faultlines are as clear as they are ominous; the scope for filling them up vanishes with each coup and other acts of violence. Staging a coup is all too easy but the body-politic has to pay a long-term price in preempting

serious political compromises and making violence endemic. The resource base being poor and the country's population bursting at the seams, the room for manoeuvre by all sides, especially governments—whether democratic or dictatorial—is small. Of all the South Asian countries, the Right is the weakest in Bangladesh, which probably explains why the army is so hyper-active in politics.

The dilemma Bangladesh intelligentsia faces in being certain of their nation's collective identity is manifest in the ideological conundrums. Not only are there all the Rightwing, i.e. Islamic and nationalist (in a territorial sense), nostrums in the field, the variety on the Left is bewildering indeed. At the time of independence, six separate groups were countable, some notably powerful or influential. Not that the Centre ground is less peopled. The life for the Ershad ML Government happens to be tolerable because of the utter disunity among the rich and varied ideological species. But the longer the ML lasts, the long-term uncertainties would multiply. While the Right-Left polarisation may prevent a truly popular front against the military, the Rightists and the Centrists may acquire enough motivation to align themselves against it. What the Left will do is unclear. Indeed, the future of the Left is the joker in the Bangladesh pack. A pointer often given by most observers of Bengal politics centres on the vicissitudes of the Left politics in India, especially the long-drawn-out unity talks among what used to be pro-Moscow and pro-Beijing parties. Whatever happens there will have a direct impact on eastern Bengal. If and when the India Left unites, some fireworks are sure to fly in and around Bangladesh.

A distant observer can afford to make wide generalisations. The hollowness of the social system, as it obtains, given the

facts of over-population and relative paucity of resources, makes for a truly turbulent politics. The scope for recognisable success, at the best of times, is limited. Media-propagated "doing well" during 1980-81 did not prevent the stormy rise of Hasina Wajid in May 1981 and the subsequent murder of President Ziaur Rahman amidst growing chaos, or to pose a big question mark before all conservatives; What happens if the ML regime acquires the image of having failed to clean up the mess or of having created its own. What would the *Jawans* and Young Turks in the army then do? This overshadows all the long-term uncertainties one has enumerated that issue from the basic incapability of any military regime to sort out questions of identity or resolve ideological contradictions; on the contrary; it makes the fundamental problems generally more insoluble. This is a Sword of Democles that hangs over a military regime with a pointed menace, though this is not the only menace. A united front of either all the political elements, Left and Right, or even of mainly Rightists and Centrists against the Army poses dangerous—for the Bangladesh Army's brass hats.

External Pressures. Talking of pressures and threats, external ones on Bangladesh cannot be ignored. Thoughts naturally turn to India that virtually surrounds it and with which there are disputes. The relations between these two neighbours have had a roller-coaster quality; these had been not too good in the last few years. But Gen. Ershad has tried to start from a more or less clean slate, as far as he is concerned. His taking the Indian Ambassador into confidence before the coup underscores this effort.

His due warning to the US and UK could only be intended to reassure them about the intention not to change the

basic pro-western orientation of the foreign policy; the motive of safeguarding the annual dosage of foreign aid from the Aid-to-Bangladesh Consortium also seems clear. It stands to reason the reassurances must also have included the statement of intent the military government would not alter the Zia policy of freer imports, encouragement to private investments, especially from abroad, and to fulfil all the requirements for the resumption of the suspended disbursements of the IMF's Extended Facility. The urgency of these assurance can be easily appreciated while they help define the nature of the new regime.

Relations With Pakistan & India. What about taking Pakistan into confidence? Where does Pakistan come into the picture? It certainly has no lever of influence. And yet Gen. Ershad thought it necessary to let Pakistani authority know of his intent. One can only surmise about the desired role by Pakistan. It looks like asking the Pakistan President to explain to the Saudis and other Gulf oil powers the need for the takeover. That makes some sense. The Bangladeshis are nearly as keen as the Pakistanis on keeping the Saudis and other oil-rich Arabs in good humour and no wonder. As it happens, Gen. Ershad has already toured Saudi Arabia—just over a month after seizing power. There is not much chance of the Dacca rulers reducing stress on their Islamic connection, thus also confirming the no-change intention.

The fact that the Indian High Commissioner too was informed of the intent to end the democratic regime superficially seems astounding. But in view of the legacy of the less-than-good relations with the big neighbour, it may have seemed important for Ershad to reassure it of the move having chiefly domestic significance. Perhaps the message went

have beyond this plain statement; the simple assurance of no change in foreign policy could more naturally have gone after the event. It is also to be remembered that the Indian Government and media had been fairly loudly signalling their disapproval of a military takeover in Bangladesh; their general preference for a democratic dispensation has been evident. If Gen. Ershad thought it necessary to take the precaution of informing the Indians before hand, it would seem likely he had something more pleasing or hopeful to say. What could that be? It could only be a promise to make efforts to improve the relations in a significant way. In any case, he did not lose much time. Within weeks of the putsch, he invited Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Indian Premier, to visit

Bangladesh, not to mention many official statements of the intent to befriend India and the earnest desire to settle outstanding disputes. The Indian newspapers were quick to remark the changed tone of the controlled media of Bangladesh; there was not much asperity in their references to the disputes. This contrasted sharply with the earlier periods when most such references and the treatment of news and comment were laced with much bitterness. It may be an exaggeration to say a new leaf has already been turned. But an intent of doing so has been manifested.

The relations with India are not a simple question of foreign policy for Bangladesh. It is much entangled with domestic issues of far-reaching consequences. Bangladesh's basic character as a polity remains to be settled, as we saw a while ago. The outcome, now postponed by this military regime's life-span, will have serious implications for both the Indian attitude and Bangladesh policy. An ultimate decision to define their national identity in terms of

religiosity will be received in India with much dismay. *Pari passu*, if the Bangladeshis come down on the side of ethnicity and democracy, the Indians may be expected to be more forthcoming and co-operative and a relatively rapid improvement in relations can be expected. But the whole question of relations with India is to really bound up with the fundamental questions of how the 10 year-old nation is rebuild and regard itself. But this decision has been postponed indefinitely—for as long as the political processes do not have time to sort out such momentous issues, whenever that may be.

By the same token, the Indians are sure, during the present interregnum, to take only a short-term view of things. They cannot be expected to make as many concessions as they, under different circumstances, might have done; their proclivity to give as little and take as much as possible should increase. They would like to avoid long-term commitments. No matter with

what ardour Gen. Ershad tries to improve the relationship, the response can only be more or less tepid. Already it is clear Mrs. Gandhi would not go to Dacca. Dacca will have to make do with the Foreign Minister's visit. The Indians would want to await a civilian and democratic government in Dacca before doing or saying all they have to, though without ceasing to be correct. Nothing dramatic need be expected, though if Gen. Ershad is smart and assiduous in his efforts he may buy some grudging intellectual non-interference in the Bangladesh politics by the Indian media. But if he is less than adroit in his dealings with New Delhi, his domestic problems may become a lot more intractable.

Anyhow, too much importance should not be attached to foreign policy questions—even to such important ones as relations with India or the West. What is decisive is significant developments in the body politic of Bangladesh.

Ershad Backed By Britain?

Lawrence Lifschultz

It was on May 30, 1981 that General Rahman was killed, under mysterious circumstances in the city port of Chittagong. Manzur, who had been in command of the Chittagong garrison, was in the custody of military intelligence officials when he was murdered three days later. Last autumn, 12 junior military officers were hanged for their part in General Rahman's killing, after being tried in secret, without defence lawyers. But Manzur was identified as the key figure behind the abortive rebellion, and as such was vilified in the official Bangladesh press. However, increasing evidence has emerged which casts doubts on whether he was involved at all.

Bangladesh military sources allege that there were earlier attempts to get rid of him. In October 1980 he narrowly escaped death—along with 11 of his most loyal officers—in a helicopter crash in the Chittagong hills. Two of the men did die, and Manzur's demand for a complete investigation is said to have been blocked by Ershad. His own inquiry indicated clear evidence of sabotage and he claimed to an acquaintance three months before his death that Ershad's 'net was slowly closing' about him.

There has been an innocent air about descriptions of the recent 'bloodless' coup in Bangladesh by its army chief of staff, Lieutenant General Hossein Mohammed Ershad: a familiar tale, it seems, of men of order arriving to cleanse away corruption. In fact, the 'quiet coup' of 24 March represents the final ascent of the most extreme group of right-wing military officers to hold power in Dacca.

In November 1975, three months after President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader

of the Awami League, was killed in a military putsch, there was a general rebellion and armed mutiny. Led by pro-socialist forces, it came within a hair's breadth of overthrowing the established order, but in the end was bloodily suppressed. Its architect, who had been a prominent figure in the Liberation War was a man called Abu Taher. Ershad, then deputy chief of army staff, had around him a small circle of right-wing military officers. They pressed for the execution of Taher—and got their way. It was the first execution of a political

figure in 40 years, and it set the pattern for the future. Two years later, in October 1977, there was another mutiny and Ershad's faction pressed vigorously for the summary hangings that followed, which were the first mass executions to be seen in South Asia since the 19th century.

Murders Of Zia And Manzur. One of Ershad's chief opponents at the time was Major General M.A. Manzur, then chief of general staff. Manzur had supported the government throughout the 1977 revolt, but opposed the mass executions, perceiving that they could be designed to get rid of military elements who stand in the way of establishing a Pakistan-style dictatorship. Manzur was killed last summer while under arrest, allegedly for engineering the murder of General Ziaur Rahman, Bangladesh's first 'demilitarised' president.

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investigation is said to have been blocked by Ershad. His own inquiry indicated clear evidence of sabotage, and he claimed to an acquaintance three months before his death that Ershad's 'net was slowly closing' about him.

It is significant that Manzur was the last respected senior officer who had participated in the independence struggle and who had been affected by its aspirations for a democratic system. Manzur and other 'freedom fighters' (as they were known) were adamantly opposed to the growing strength of conservative 'Razakar' elements within the armed forces. The events of last May represented the culmination of the conflict between the two factions.

New Junta Leading members of new junta, including Major General Mohabat Jan Choudhary, Director of Military Intelligence and Major General Nuruddin, Chief of General Staff, have spoken openly of the need to think in terms of the 'Indonesian model' of government—and indeed have been to Jakarta to study its history and methods. (It is not clear whether they intend a repeat of the half million casualties on which Suharto has based 17 years of military dictatorship.)

We can now expect several months of show trials of ex-officials and ministers charged with corruption. Local commentators and foreign correspondents who once praised General Rahman and his team for their lack of corruption, will now praise their successors for prosecuting a selection of the very same men for bribes and kick-backs. Meanwhile, a vast military expansion will get under way.

Ershad and the new junta have made known their intention to triple—and if possible quadruple—the armed forces to a

strength of 250,000; this scale of increase will certainly be necessary if they are to attempt to introduce the 'Indonesian model'. In a stagnant economy, where millions are starving, it will be the only growth sector and will be financed by foreign aid. Parliament, now suspended, would never have voted such an allocation.

British Intelligence Mission In the course of all these events, neither the United States nor Britain has stood idly by. The death of Sheikh Mujib has since been demonstrated by US Congressional inquiries to have been directly linked with American covert activity in Bangladesh. Following the installation of the pro-American regime of General Ziaur Rahman, the British government was asked to give specific assistance to the police and paramilitary forces, as well as to send a special military training mission to Dacca. In 1976, Britain provided £ 720,000 to improve police telecommunications—funds which completed an earlier security assistance programme that had been initiated by the United States and subsequently banned by new Congressional legislation.

In July 1977, an eight-man military mission arrived in Dacca from Britain, headed by Colonel T.A. Gibson, a former Special Air Service commander in Northern Ireland. The Gibson mission, ostensibly a training unit, was believed by its critics within the Bangladesh armed forces to be

principally concerned with military intelligence and with finding out the political disposition of Westminster, there was no equivalent law, and thus the British could take up where the American officers left off.

The 1975 pro-socialist mutiny had attracted a measure of support that took Western powers by surprise. This was not least because the new leaders of the Bangladesh army were extremely young, and had been drawn from the lower echelons of the army of united Pakistan (an inevitable consequence of the general discrimination against Bengalis in the Pakistani services) so the West knew little about them. The British military advisory group was intended to fix all that. Since 1977 the missions of Colonel Gibson and his successors have drawn extremely close to the conservative military faction which has now taken command.

One of the demands of the soldiers' rebellion of 1975 was for a 'complete abolition of British colonial practices within the armed forces'. Officers who criticised the arrival of the Gibson mission have all since been purged, exiled or killed. Of course, it may be a coincidence. Or it may be one more step towards the introduction of the 'Indonesian model' in Bengal.

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Your Automobile Engineers
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Text Of General Ershad's Declaratory Address To The Nation March 24, 1982

Following is the text of the address to nation by Lt. General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, Chief Martial Law Administrator and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Bangladesh delivered over the Radio and Television on Wednesday, March 24, 1982.

Bismillahir Rahmaner Rahim,

My dear countrymen, Assalamu Alaikum,

I have come before you at the most critical moment for the nation. The Armed Forces had to take over the administration of the country to safeguard nation's sovereignty and independence and to save and rescue the country from social, administrative and economic disaster. Martial Law has been promulgated throughout the country. The President has been relieved of his duties and the Council of Ministers and the Parliament have been dissolved. A civilian will be nominated as new President and he will assume the charge of the Head of the State. An Advisory Council will be formed to help me as Head of the Government. Meanwhile, some measures have been taken to preserve law and order. Soon you will come to know about the details.

Now I want to say something to you about the background in which the Army had to take over this onerous responsibility. You know, the National Security, Independence and Sovereignty were threatened due to social and political indiscipline, unprecedented corruption, devastated economy, administrative stalemate, extreme deterioration of law and order and frightening economic and food crisis. The Government was rendered totally ineffective and unsuccessful because of the meanness, inefficiency, favouritism, limitless corruption and internecine quarrell of the ruling coterie. Countrymen had no confidence in the Government. You will surely remember on February 11 last the former President in his address to the nation himself admitted the fact about his corrupt Council of Ministers and dissolved that inefficient body and pledged to form a new Council of Ministers comprising honest sincere and efficient persons. The people once again expected that their elected President would form a new Council of Ministers reflecting their hopes and aspirations and that there would be no doubt in the minds of the people about the efficiency and honesty of the new Members of

the Council. But it was a matter of great regret that newly formed Council of Ministers had failed to fulfil people's hopes and aspirations. Because the same old people were incorporated in the Cabinet and there were doubts in the minds of the people about their honesty and sincerity. Attempts were made to change the situation through expansion of the new Council of Ministers and reallocation of portfolios. But this apparent change was nothing but a futile attempt to remove the inherent weakness and inefficiency of the Government.

The people had the hope that this change would help their desired objective that it would be helpful to set up a powerful Government of corruption-free and capable men which would enjoy the confidence of the masses. But their hopes and aspirations were shattered, consequently the whole nation plunged into the abyss of great frustration and extreme uncertainty.

Onslaught was mounted time and again in the past on democracy which had been achieved after tremendous sacrifices. But the people of this country, and the patriotic Armed Forces as the ever vigilant sentinel of democracy had resisted the attack on it every time through their combined efforts. Various events from May 30 to February 11 bore the shining stamps of these combined efforts, but afterwards extreme anarchy and deadlock were created in all spheres of national life due to inefficiency of the quarter in power and ill attempts beyond any limits for personal aggrandisement. This resulted in serious instability in the social and political fields.

The notion had been created in the minds of the people that the Armed Forces had the covert support to all the important decisions of this inefficient Government. Words had been spread to create an im-

pression to the effect that the Government had been compelled to take certain important decisions under the pressure of the Armed Forces. But I want to let you know in unequivocal terms that it was a fully wrong and motivated notion. The Government made this futile ill-attempt at creating confusion in the minds of the people only to cover up their misdeeds and for the realisation of their selfish ends.

At this critical juncture of the country and the nation, the patriotic Armed Forces had to respond to the call of the people by taking this extreme measure, for the nation had no other alternative. Otherwise the security of the country, nay its existence would have been at stake and its overall economic and social framework would have suffered a great setback. Rampant and all-pervasive corruption had created such a situation of anarchy in the country that a powerful Minister of the Government had no scruple of conscience to give protection to a hardened criminal in his house. You will be surprised to know that the men occupying the highest offices in the Government tried to blackout this abominable development in the newspapers. But our fearless and objective journalists had been able to uphold the great ideals of journalism by not yielding to the conspiring quarters. As a result, the mask of the corrupt Government fell before the people and which compelled the Government to take next steps.

You all know that the national economy is today fully ruined and consequently the economic salvation of the common man is a far cry. The erroneous policy of the Government, the lack of sound economic programme and above all absence of efficient management created an economic mess that gradually widened the gap between the Government and the people.

Production in the mills and factories

were about to be stopped. On the other hand rampant looting, misuse of power and wealth continue unabated in the banks, offices, nationalised mills and factories following serious mismanagement and corruption. The civic life has become intolerable because of the excesses of smugglers, blackmarketeers traders and profiteers. The lack of farsightedness and failure is taking timely measures by the Government also pushed the country into a serious food and economic crisis. The local and foreign business men and industrialists were reluctant to invest because of serious mismanagement in the export import and foreign exchange sectors. The foreign aid agencies, the International Banks and other financial organisations gradually began to lose confidence in the Government. For this reason, the present Government had failed to achieve the expected response from them in time of emergency. As a whole the country had proceeded towards bankruptcy rapidly. The people of the country hoped that the frustrating situation will be changed after the last elections. But, it is a matter of great regret that all of our hopes and aspirations and dreams have been shattered. The nation had been plunged into total frustration for the non-fulfilment of their hopes.

The nation also observed with utmost anger and frustration that their elected President himself bowed to the pressure of vested interests and condemned quarters of the society. He also breached his pledges to the nation. On the other hand, the ruling party had entered into unparalleled internal conflicts for their personal gain. The peoples' representatives who were voted to power have engaged themselves in places of conspiracy for their narrow interests. As a result a serious uncertainty prevailed in the country and a situation of complete stalemate was created in all spheres of national life. Dear countrymen, our people

are basically patriotic and honest. If they get calm, hard working and able leadership, they could ride the crest of fame. They have proved their worth under the able and dynamic leadership of Ziaur Rahman. But the people had to play the role of silent spectators on seeing the serious mismanagement in political, social and economic fields after the death of Ziaur Rahman. The people are completely aware of the duty of the Armed Forces. The people were confident that the members of the Armed Forces—the sons of the soil—will stand by their side in the time of national crisis because it had been proved earlier especially after the incident of May 30, 1981.

But after the recent events, people also started to lose confidence in the Armed Forces, because we (Army) were not coming forward to rescue them from this acute crisis of the country and the nation. Their life had become unbearable gradually at the hands of extremely corrupt and dishonest persons.

The members of the Armed Forces who are firmly determined to continue the democratic forces kept silent for long even at the frustrating and disastrous situation because of their firm confidence in democratic values. The members of the Armed Forces remained patient like their civilian brothers. They also hoped that the Government elected by the votes would be able to tackle the problem. The important role played by the Armed Forces to protect the democratic process in the country so long are not unknown to you. Many requested me to take over power since May 30. In the light of circumstances, perhaps that would have been quite normal and desirable. But perhaps you do not know that I had rejected firmly those requests. Because I believed I would be able to serve the country well by remaining

in my position. Because of my deep respect for the great democratic values I hoped that the politicians of the country particularly those in power, would take appropriate steps in this national crisis and lead the country towards progress and development. But it is a matter of great regret that the subsequent events frustrated all our hopes and aspirations and an acute crisis enveloped the national life as a result of mean and vested activities of the people in power, all our efforts to uphold democracy failed helplessly. It is undoubtedly a matter of great regret but still we have to face this situation with patience and courage and we shall have to find out the solution with the sincere efforts and active cooperation from you all. *Insha Allah* we would be able to face the challenge. We can no longer sit idle in this tragic circumstances and crisis.

A Judge of the Bangladesh Supreme Court in his speech at the installation ceremony of Chattrra Union of Dacca University, on March 16 said: "Social life has reached such a stage where ones influence is measured by the extent of harm one can cause. Those who are honest and are good men in the society are forced to pass their days in helplessness. Gradually the good people are withdrawing from social life.

As a result, power and influence of the dishonest and corrupt men continue to increase. Today our individual social and national values had deteriorated to such a dangerous extent that we all have to challenge it with courage, otherwise our dignity as a self-respecting nation would be jeopardised".

He said with regret that the reports of misuse and embezzlement of national resources are being published in the newspapers but till today there are no remedies to them. The country is submerged by the

tide of corruption and we are either looking at it helplessly or allowing ourselves to be carried by that tide. Such a situation could not be allowed to continue. Today we are determined to face this situation. In such a situation or role as silent spectators or remaining idle would amount to betrayal to the country and the people. In this context, I want to categorically declare before you that never had I had any political ambition. I am not a politician, I am a soldier and with the pride of a soldier I want to engage myself to the service of the people. I want to inform you in clear terms that our earnest and main desire is to restore democracy in the country. But that democracy has to be consistent with the hopes and aspirations of the people, of meeting their demands. It will be such a democracy through which the people would be able to participate actively and totally in all the national activities. Through this democracy the people would get a representative Government which is made by them and for them and devoted to their welfare.

If we all work unitedly and sincerely then, *Insha Allah*, we will not be delayed in achieving that target. Our principal objective would be to hold fair general elections in the country as soon as possible by restoring a congenial atmosphere. I firmly believe that general elections will be held in the country as soon as possible.

Dear countrymen, now I want to say something about the application of Martial Law. The present military rule is not a statutory old traditional one. The main source of this military rule is the nine crore people of the country, so it is deeply related with the amelioration of their conditions. The basic objective of this new system introduced in view of the need of the people is to establish a happy prosperous and exploitation-free society properly reflecting

the hopes and aspirations of the country-men.

As you know, the path of democracy could not be made clean and stable if the present unhealthy political situation is not removed. So our aim is to create a healthy political situation and atmosphere here so that there will be no obstacle towards the growth of democracy and that the country and the nation is not plunged into crisis time and again.

As the present acute economic problem was not a day's creation; similarly there is no immediate solution to this Himalayan problem. We have to start our march unitedly and sincerely being imbued with the great ideal of patriotism, honesty and hard-work.

An economic revolution has to be started for establishing an exploitation-free society and achieving economic emancipation. The aim of the new economic system will be to check price hike, to remove food crisis on emergency basis, to achieve self-reliance in every sphere of national life by reducing dependence on foreign aid and to transform the Government-owned mills and factories into profitable organisations on commercial basis.

For this we will require to cut down administrative expenses, check wastage of national wealth and maintain austerity. The economic disorder and crimes would be dealt with strongly under the Martial Law.

A congenial atmosphere has to be developed for the private entrepreneur.

We will also have to adopt revolutionary programmes for the development of agriculture and have to make concerted efforts

to increase food production through necessary land reforms. We have to adopt practical and workable programmes regarding industrial development. We must ensure uninterrupted production. At the same time we should be active to raise the standard of living of the workers and their rights.

The quick growth rate of population has been severely hampering all our developmental efforts. We have to control this situation. In this regard our main task will be to create awareness among the people, we have to take practical steps to solve the country's unemployment problem so that this surplus manpower can be utilised successfully in all developmental activities of the country.

The Armed Forces will participate with the people actively in this new development and economic system for making a far-reaching impact on all national life and thus create a new horizon in the country's economic development. The main problem among the immediate ones is corruption which is eating into the vitals of the society like cancer and polluting social life. We are strongly determined to free our society from the all-pervading corruption. We are declaring all out *Jehad* against it by terming it as national enemy from today. I can assure you that all corrupt people of all sections will be severely dealt with by imposing all power under Martial Law against this national enemy. But we must remember the roots of this corruption are very deep and the circle is very powerful like the vested interests. Powerful vested interests at the upper echelons of politics and economy have built this fort of corruption. That is why the intensity of this hated malaise is so deep.

That is why effective steps have to be taken to remove this deadly social injustice

from social life once and for all by building a strong popular resistance against it.

There have been many incidents of agitations, movements, *gharaos*, strikes and *hartals* in the name of politics and labour movement. Needless to say, such activities are very harmful for a country like ours and this had pushed the country to the path of destruction. In the greater interest of the country such activities would no longer be tolerated at all.

Production in the country has seriously suffered. An impasse has been created in the economic activities. That is why, from now onward all types of agitation and political activities are banned.

In the administrative field also we have to bring about a total change. Such a new administrative structure would have to be built which would be oriented towards people's welfare and which would make removal of the gap between the administration and the common man possible. As a matter of fact, participation by the people's representatives in the administration would have to be ensured. By making the local administration pro-people it would have to be built as true servants of the people. This new administration would have to be accountable to the people. We are firmly determined to eradicate bribery, corruption, nepotism, misuse of power, neglect of duty, wastage of resources etc. from the administration. A programme for reformation would have to be taken in the field of judiciary also so that the people can get fair justice in the quickest possible time and at less expenditure.

You all know that the agencies responsible for maintenance of law and order were made ineffective either for personal or mere political reasons. From now onward they would be allowed to do their work in

the greater interest of the people without showing any fear or favour.

We have one more heavy responsibility to reform. That is, restoration of the sacred atmosphere of education in the campus by freeing it from all vices. You all know that in the past, a section of politicians used to vitiate the sacred atmosphere of the campus by involving the students directly in politics for realising their base personal interest. In the name of student's movement, these people with vested interests used to utilise the seekers of knowledge for realising their own interests. As a result, the campuses were turned into theatres of war clanking of weapons vitiated the open and sacred atmosphere of education. This situation is without doubt extremely harmful for the nation. That is why we have decided that sacred atmosphere of the campus has to be restored immediately and at any cost and by providing due opportunity of learning to the seekers of knowledge who would have to be developed as ideal citizens and worthy sons of the country.

I want to assure you in this regard that appropriate measures would be taken immediately without any compromise.

Dear countrymen, the people irrespective of religion, caste and party affiliations had embarked upon the independence struggle imbued with the great ideals and spirit of the liberation war. Inspired by the spirit of independence, the people came forward to establish an independent and sovereign state staking their own lives. You are well aware that the liberation war was not fought merely for the sake of a piece of land or for a flag. It was intended to establish an exploitation free and corruption-free society in an independent Bangladesh. Harnessing independently our own distinctive culture and heritage was also desired. Ensuring the reflection of the religion

in the individual and collective lives was also one of the main objectives of the liberation struggle. Our freedom fighters who carried the highest example of sacrifice did not fight for any gain, rather they participated in the liberation struggle to build a truly independent, sovereign, powerful and self-reliant country at all costs. Now we have to make fresh vow to implement their dreams and if necessary to be prepared for all sacrifices. In this regard I want to declare unequivocally, that the grateful nation would engage all resources at its disposal to realise the dreams of its heroes.

I want to make it clear that in respect of international relations, we firmly believe in the foreign policy of friendship to all and malice to none. The main objectives of our foreign policy are sovereign equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and peaceful solution of all problems. Our relations with those countries who are friendly to Bangladesh and wish us well would continue. We want to make special emphasis to establish good relations with our neighbouring nations. We would continue our efforts for the establishment of regional cooperation among the South Asian Nations, the far sighted initiative of late President Ziaur Rahman.

Our foreign policy will be mainly based on the UN charter, friendly relations with Islamic countries and total unity and solidarity with the third world and non-aligned nations. The main objectives of this policy is to preserve and consolidate our independence earned at the cost of supreme sacrifice and to strengthen international cooperation in our development efforts.

We are determined to expand our friendly relations with different countries by following these objectives and principles. We along with other developing countries of

the world reiterate our total support to the struggle against all kinds of colonialism, aggression and expansionism.

We shall honour all the international and regional agreements and understanding with Bangladesh. I have the confidence that the bonds of friendship with the organisation of Islamic Conference and third world countries would be further strengthened. Our unstinted support to our Palestinian brothers will continue in their life and death struggle which they have been continuing to regain their motherland. We shall continue our efforts to improve our relations with the big powers. But I want to declare it categorically that we want friendship with any country of the world but not domination.

Dear countrymen, I have placed this statement to give you a picture of the overall situation prevailing in the country and to inform you about our main policy and objective. My further objective was to make it clear that this extreme measure has been taken in the greater interest of the people and in the interest of the stability of Bangladesh.

In this crucial stage of the nation, I appeal to all the countrymen, particularly the politicians, students, teachers, peasants, soldiers, workers, Government and non-Government officials, businessmen, industrialists, intelligentsia and freedom fighters and people from all strata of life to come forward unitedly irrespective of party affiliation and opinion to dedicate themselves to the work of building the country.

Your sincere cooperation and active participation will make our great effort successful. I appeal to the Martial Law Enforcing Agencies, members of the Armed and para-military forces that you will discharge your duties and responsibilities

uncompromisingly and with impartiality, honesty, fairplay and sincerity and faithfulness. The whole nation today is looking forward to you. The bright future of the country depends on your work.

Let us pray to the Almighty Allah, the

Merciful so that we can identify ourselves as a strong self-reliant nations in the community of nations by passing this crucial test and can establish a democratic system as soon as possible. Let Almighty Allah be with us. *Khoda Hafez*, Bangladesh Zindabad.

Bangladesh Army To Seek Greater Role In Politics

The Chief of Staff of the Bangladesh Army, Lieutenant General H.M. Ershad has called on politicians to consider important constitutional changes which will actively involve the military in the country's affairs and ward off the possibility of future coup attempts.

In a forthright interview at his home in the Dacca cantonment General Ershad pointed out that sections of the army had assassinated two Bangladeshi presidents—Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975, and Ziaur Rahman in May this year. There had also been other coup attempts.

"My army has got involved", General Ershad said, "It is my responsibility. Obviously, we have to approach the next president. In a developing nation, the army does play a very high role in the stability of the country. To stop further coups, if the army participates in the administration of the country, then they will probably have a feeling they are also involved, and they will not be frustrated."

General Ershad stressed that while he was prepared to take an initiative after the

presidential election on November 15, any constitutional changes that resulted have to be endorsed and carried out by the civilian Government.

Although General Ershad said that morale in the army was "absolutely all right," it is now clear that last month, in the final weeks before the hanging of 12 officers for mutiny leading to the assassination of President Zia, a dangerous situation had arisen within the ranks.

On September 7, General Ershad ordered that a message be read to soldiers assuring them that the officers would be executed.

The Chief of Staff maintains that his "order of the day" was not a challenge to the High Court or the Supreme Court, which at the time were considering petitions asking them to rule that they had jurisdiction over the fate of those tried and sentenced by the secret court martial.

However, restless Jawans who listened to his message would have been forgiven for thanking that General Ershad was pro-

missing to hang the officers regardless of the findings of the civilian judiciary.

In his message, General Ershad said: "I want to assert again that we consider it against our constitution that matter concerning military affairs should be dragged into the High Court, and we consider it also a threat to the discipline of the armed forces. We really hope that law will take its own course. I would like to tell our soldiers in all ranks that the sentences given by the court martial will be implemented. Let there be no doubt or suspicion about it."

The message also said he would not permit "the activities of the armed forces to be used for political purposes. The wrongdoers must be punished" he added. We hope God will give us courage to perform our responsibilities.

In the event, the courts ruled that they had no jurisdiction to intervene, and helicopters immediately took off from Dacca to the different gaols where the condemned officers were being held carrying with them signed death warrants. The hangings were over in 12 hours.

In his interview General Ershad explained: "It was my internal problem. It was an order of the day to say just have patience, I am sure the High Court and the Supreme Court will give the correct verdict, and whatever judgement is passed by the army they will not do anything against it."

Asked if he would have hanged the officers anyway if the courts had ruled differently, the chief of staff laughed and said: This is a very difficult question.

Informed sources said that "the basis of the Jawans' unrest was not only their love for the assassinated President, but also the

feeling that if ordinary soldiers had been responsible they would have been executed with little ceremony, and possibly — as has happened before — not even a court martial.

And the chief of staff told me: "I had to give them this message. This was an officers versus the other ranks. Most of the people punished were officers, and there was a feeling that just because they were officers we were going to protect them."

General Ershad defended his decision to try the officers for mutiny—which allowed him to hold a secret court martial—rather than for murder, which would have been dealt with by an open civilian court.

"A trial in a civil court takes a very very long time," General Ershad said. A trial for murder would have taken months and months and months, and I would have had a great problem with the army. Ultimately it would have been very dangerous for the country. The President was very much loved by the troops, and naturally the feeling of the troops was very high."

On a possible future constitutional role for the army in Bangladesh, he said that he had discussed the merits of the Turkish system with the late President Zia. "But ultimately was discarded it," he said, "We are a different nation. Our people are politically very, very conscious. I should say it is a volatile nation."

General Ershad said that the military was "absolutely neutral" in the presidential election, although he did admit having intervened personally to persuade the sick and reluctant acting President, Justice Abdus Sattar to stand as a candidate.

He said he had done this merely to ensure that, during the vital interregnum,

the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party did not fall apart while bickering over rival candidates.

It would have been possible for the army to have declared martial law, General Ershad went on, but they wanted the constitutional process to continue.

Martial Law is never the answer. General Ershad said "Pakistan of course is continuing with one after another. But does it ultimately pay? It does not. The army's role is different from running an administration. If you get involved in this, ultimately you destroy the army."

*The Guardian,
London, October 7, 1981*

MARTIAL LAW WITH A DIFFERENCE: ERSHAD INVITES HEADS OF STATES

Chief Martial Law Administrator, Lt.-Gen. H.M. Ershad, last Sunday (16 May) addressing the nation over radio and television gave a resume of the steps taken by the government in different sectors of national life in the one and half months of Martial Law rule which, he said, was in the interest of nine crore people. He was confident that the people and soldiers will unite in the struggle for the establishment of the rule of law, social justice and real democracy. He highlighted the reforms that he was about to bring in the different spheres of national life.

The CMLA announced that the present administrative system was a legacy of the past colonial rule and he was determined to totally recast it and bring it to the doorsteps of the people and ensure their participation. In the new administrative setup the "thana" will be the pivot of the administration. High ranking and responsible officers would be posted at thana level to work in consultation with the peoples representatives. Together they would formulate plans and execute these in their areas.

Regarding the food situation, the CMLA

claimed that had Martial Law been proclaimed one week later then the whole country would have sunk into a devastating famine. Smuggling of food grains from government godowns to across the borders, corruption and mismanagement in the food sector and total bungling had almost landed the country into a famine condition. Allowing of unhampered distribution of foodgrains by the Martial Law Government, the quick import of food grains from countries around the region, including Pakistan and Burma, the total checking of corruption in the food sector—these active steps taken by the Martial Law administration—have saved the country from a food crisis which would otherwise have had disastrous effects on the country's economy.

He informed the nation that the price of food grains was again normal now and nobody in Bangladesh would die of starvation.

In order to bring justice to the people, the High Courts would be taken to the divisions. The four divisions of Bangladesh would have High Court Divisions from June 15. This would help stop the complications and delays in disposal of cases which have brought untold sufferings to the people. This step would help bring the judiciary close to the people.

The CMLA stressed that the new martial law government was the people's martial law—a martial law with a difference. Under this new government all kinds of corruptions will be weeded out sternly. The government was also in no mood to revel in luxury—everybody would have to discipline their life style to austerity. He advised the government officials to walk or ride bicycles to their respective offices. He has also totally banned the offering of tea or snacks in any government offices. No sector of the national activities whether in the government or semi-government; autonomous or private sector will be spared from

this austerity drive. Gen. Ershad declared that stern action would be taken against those leaders and government officials on charges of corruption. But this will be done through the process of law under martial law courts. For that two special tribunals and 34 Martial Law Courts have been set up to try them. Moreover, the accumulated wealth through corruption will be confiscated in the public interest.

☞ The Chief Martial Law Administrator after he took over power has sent out letters

of invitation to heads of states in the South East Asian region to visit Bangladesh and he has also in the same letter described the situation in the country which made him take over power.

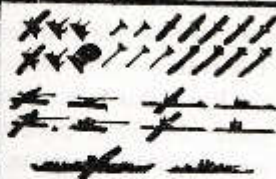
President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan and Mrs Indira Gandhi are amongst those invited.

—Despatch by Tehmina Saeed,
Morning News, Karachi,
May 19, 1982.



Newsletter

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SEA HARRIER

Fully Operational

The British Aerospace Sea Harrier has come of age graduating from occasional shipborne exercises to regular deployments at sea as seen in the Falklands' armed conflict. This present report describes Sea Harrier operations by the Fleet Air Arm and the various means that have been developed to ensure safe take-offs and landings across a broad band of day/night weather conditions and sea states. It has been prepared on the basis of several interviews, notably with Lt. Cdr. Douglas Hamilton, senior pilot of No. 801 sqn. and "Mike" Snelling, principal British Aerospace test pilot for the Sea Harrier.

The RN Fleet Air Arm's V/Stol Sea Harrier squadrons are now fully equipped and the two operational units are normally on board their parent vessels whenever they are at sea, No. 800 sqn. in HMS Hermes and No. 801 in HMS Invincible. Recent exercises in the Atlantic have confirmed that the Sea Harrier FRS, 1 can perform successfully the tasks for which the aircraft was designed, giving the Royal

Navy an extremely useful organic air-defence capability, with secondary surface attack and reconnaissance roles. It is not (nor was it ever intended to be) a substitute for the F-14 Tomcat with its AIM-54 Phoenix missile, but it does possess unique abilities in air combat and an unrivalled flexibility in certain aspects of naval operations.

Its current status is the result of several years of effort not only to develop a new Harrier variant specifically for regular maritime basing (the AV-8A survives largely by intensive preventive maintenance) and with emphasis on the air-defence role, but also to develop operating techniques that make full use of its inherent potential for safe operations in bad weather by day or by night. This development effort is continuing with the aim of further expanding the Sea Harrier's operating limits and of adding new armament and, later, equipment.

Sea Harrier Organization & Training. The Sea Harrier "wing" of the FAA consists

of the headquarters squadron (No. 899) of seven aircraft and the two operational units of five aircraft each. Total RN orders stand at 34 Sea Harriers and four Harrier T-4 trainers, the latter being identical to the Royal Air Force two-seaters. The single-seater buy was planned on the basis of covering attrition up to 1990, although only one aircraft has so far been lost since the first delivery in June 1979. Of the two-seaters (which, unlike the Indian Navy T-60s, are purely for V/STOL flying training), one will be based at the RAF Harrier operational conversion unit at Wittering and two with 899 Sqn. at Yeovilton, with one aircraft held in reserve. In addition, No. 899 Sqn. will operate in the training role the two Hunter T-8Ms that were used as flying testbeds for the Sea Harrier's new avionics.

The HQ squadron is responsible for training pilots for both of the operational units and also participates in sea trials in combination with the four development-batch Sea Harriers operated by MoD Boscombe Down and British Aerospace. Pilot training prior to that given by 899 Sqn. is based on the RAF fast-jet syllabus with Harrier conversion. The full course consists of 75 hours on the Bulldog primary trainer at Leeming, 135 hours on the Jet Provost basic jet trainer at Cranwell, 85 hours on the Hawk advanced trainer at Valley, 50 hours of tactical weapons training on the Hawk at Chivenor, 27 hours on the Harrier (including preliminary air-combat instruction) at Wittering and about 90 hours of operational flying training on the Sea Harrier, Harrier T-4 and Hunter T-8M at Yeovilton.

The graduating pilot has thus accumulated approximately 460 flying hours, including something in the region of 100 hours on the Harrier V/STOL family. At Yeovilton, aside from learning to operate

the Sea Harrier systems, he has taken off using a ski-jump and he has been taught to vector the thrust of the Rolls-Royce Pegasus turbofan in the course of air-combat manoeuvres (ACM.) At Wittering his instruction has included use of the Harrier GR-3 simulator, and in due course No. 899 Sqn. will have a full mission simulator for the Sea Harrier—this is now under development by Singer Link-Miles.

When the Sea Harrier was first introduced, most pilots assigned to the type had prior fast-jet experience on the F-4 Phantom or the Buccaneer and needed only a two-week refresher course on the Hunter at Yeovilton before covering to the Harrier at Wittering. At present, most of the student pilots either come from helicopter flying or are direct entrants with no flying experience. Both categories do the complete course.

The Sea Harrier is not difficult to fly but, like previous members of the family, requires careful sideslip angle monitoring in partially jetborne flight because of the rolling moment induced. Handling at the hover is markedly better than for earlier Harrier variants because of a change in lateral gearing, and an increase in reaction-control power in roll. The raised cockpit considerably enhances rear view and accessibility in the front fuselage area but there is some loss of weathercock stability. In conventional flight at high angles of attack, handling is consequently not as good as for the RAF's GR-3, although it is superior to that of long-nosed T-4.

Missions. As indicated earlier, the Sea Harrier's principal role is air defence. In the anti-ship role with conventional weapons, it is restricted at present to the use of 455-kg bombs and its two 50mm rocket pods in prospect, but it is painfully obvious that none of these would be a realistic

armament against Soviet Navy vessels. A major improvement will come with the British Aerospace P-3T Sea Eagle sea-skimming anti-ship missile, trials of which have recently commenced on a Sea Harrier. The "strike" part of the Sea Harrier FRS.1 (fighter, reconnaissance, strike) designation implies the use of nuclear weapons but the RN is making no comment on its current clearance status in this mission.

In the reconnaissance role the Sea Harrier uses both its Ferranti Blue Fox radar and the permanently fitted starboard oblique camera. Data-link transmission of reconnaissance data back to the parent ship is a longer-term possibility.

With only five Sea Harriers on a ship, the aircraft is generally operated as a singleton, although a two or four-aircraft element might be called for in special circumstances, e.g. an attack with "iron" bombs. There are thus no section-leaders or wingmen among the pilots; they simply fly the missions for which they are qualified (on the recent tour in *Invincible*, for example, five of the seven pilots were night-rated).

In the air-defence role, the Sea Harrier functions in one of two ways—either as the sole fixed-wing element present or as part of a larger fighter force. In the first case, which would be more typical of a minor emergency than of a full-scale war, the Sea Harriers could intercept a shadowing aircraft and a limited number of intruders, acting as a first line of defence outside the range of the Royal Navy's surface-to-air missiles.

Such missions could be flown either as deck-launched intercepts or as combat air patrols, although it is clear from the number of aircraft in an RN squadron that

a combat air patrol would generally be flown on the basis of an assumed "threat axis" i.e. the vector to the nearest enemy airfield or carrier.

From an RN viewpoint, even if the Sea Harrier could do nothing more than destroy the shadowing aircraft, this alone would justify the type's development since it would eliminate the source of both precise information regarding the position of the convoy or task group and mid-course guidance for long-range cruise missiles. The aircraft can of course achieve much more than this.

In the event of a major war in Europe, the Sea Harriers would be part of a large team protecting allied shipping in the North Atlantic and between Britain and the Continent. Their aerial killing ground would be between the F-14/Phoenix perimeter and the shipborne surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft guns, and they would be controlled not only on the basis of information from their parent ship's own radar but also using data from allied ships and US Navy-E-2C Hawkeyes, as well as from land-based AEW Nimrods and E-3 AWACS.

The performance of the Sea Harrier's Ferranti Blue Fox radar is classified, but successful interceptions will generally be assisted by instructions from an aircraft controller to bring the aircraft into radar contact with the target. The controller may be on the parent carrier or on one of a number of destroyers e.g. one of the Sheffield class. The point is worth making that this control technique is no longer a matter of placing the fighter on an exact reciprocal heading at a precise offset from the target track and then instructing the pilot to commence a set-piece turn at just the right time. Provided the Sea Harrier can be guided to a point where contact is ob-

Invincible's 801 Sqn operated mainly in the air-defence role in conjunction with F-14s from the Eisenhower, but some surface attack and reconnaissance missions were flown when the air threat was Harriers and their Blue Fox radars, 100% availability was achieved for much of the time and the ship returned from its three-month cruise with all the squadron's Blue Foxes serviceable.

Reliability of the Sea Harrier was such that the squadron had been operating at sea for more than six weeks before it was unable to carry out a planned sortie. At one stage a combat air patrol was required against a stated threat axis and 801 Squadron provided Sea Harriers on station for 90 hours non-stop, a remarkable achievement for a live-aircraft, seven-pilot unit and one that drew praise from the US Navy.

Invincible was not designed initially as a platform for Sea Harriers, which accounts for its limited (7B) ski-jump and the fact that in some respects its systems are not optimised for the air-defence role. Nonetheless, it has been demonstrated that Sea Harriers can carry out successful interceptions on the basis of Blue Fox, given initial control from the ship.

Manoeuvrability. The US takes the Sea Harrier's aircombat manoeuvre capability very seriously and has been pleased with results so far obtained in simulated dog-fights with all other aircraft types. In essence, the ability to vector the thrust in flight gives the Sea Harrier pilot the ability to decelerate suddenly and change his aircraft's attitude and flightpath without warning to his opponent. Its success rate also benefits from small size, smoke-free exhaust, modest fuel flow (in comparison with afterburning fighters) and excellent accele-

With air-to-air armament at present limited to the AIM-9-G Sidewinder, which is a rear-aspect attack missile, the chance of reaching a firing position against a high-flying supersonic target is naturally small. However, the all aspect AIM-9L is already in the RN inventory and is cleared for the Sea Harrier, which will thus shortly have a much improved kill probability against virtually any Soviet combat aircraft.

Not is the Sea Harrier completely dependent on remote vectoring and its Blue Fox radar to find enemy aircraft. The ESM fit, which accounts for the forward-looking radome near the fin tip and the aft-looking radome behind the tail reaction nozzle, is more sophisticated in display than the simple radar-warning receiver fitted to RAF Harriers and provides the pilot with specific information on the nature and bearing of enemy radars. This enables, for example, a shadowing aircraft to be intercepted with very limited use of Blue Fox and hence with minimal warning to the enemy's own ESM system.

While very little has been made of the recent Nato naval exercises, they did prove that the Sea Harrier and the Invincible-class carriers can do the jobs they were designed and built for. There were no surprises to report. Exercise Ocean Venture began on August 21 last year, with ships leaving Norfolk, Virginia, for Norway; it was followed by Ocean Safari, which continued from the UK to Portugal and ended on September 22. A force of about 70 ships took part, including the carrier USS Eisenhower, harassed by surface ships and submarines as well as aircraft from land bases and the USS Forrestal.

ration, although this is not as good as for the F-16.

A further important factor is that the Sea Harrier pilot knows that his aircraft will not "depart" with the jets aft. If he should get into difficulty with the jets down, he can always select zero nozzle angle and the aircraft will recover immediately. Even junior pilots therefore manoeuvre the Sea Harrier with complete confidence, knowing that they will not lose control of the aircraft, and they can thus take on fighters which in theory have much better turning performance.

Kill ratios of approximately 2:1 have been claimed by 899 Squadron against the F-5Es of the USAF 527th TFT Aggressor Squadron at Alconbury. Satisfactory results (though closer to unity) have also been obtained by the same unit against USAF F-15s and by 800 Squadron against the 388th TFW F-16s.

Carrier Operations. Whatever the merits of the Sea Harrier once it is in the air, it would have no value if it could not be flown from a carrier deck and recovered by the normal service pilot, across a reasonable spectrum of conditions. Special techniques and equipment have been developed to achieve this objective and to ensure that the basic operating flexibility of this STOVL (short take-off, vertical landing) aircraft can be exploited. One pointer to the success of these measures is the fact that, over a two-month period of flying from *Invincible*, Sea Harriers of No. 801 Squadron performed no fewer than 200 night deck landings.

It was originally planned, when the aircraft were finally ordered, for the Sea Harriers to operate from *Invincible*-class ships with flat decks. To perform the three set-piece missions required (which all pro-

duce roughly the same take-off weights), it would have been necessary to use the full deck run of approximately 170m as well as water injection in the Pegasus engine. The subsequent development of the ski-jump resulted in a major improvement in take-off performance, which has postponed the need to clear water injection for short take-offs. The use of water injection in vertical take-offs is perfectly safe, since, if they simply remain where it is. In a short take-off, however, whether from a deck or from a short airstrip, the aircraft is almost immediately committed and a safe abort is virtually impossible. A "dry" short take-off eliminates the danger of water injection failure while providing an emergency reserve against any small shortfall in thrust or slowness in engine acceleration. Nonetheless, water injection may eventually be required for short take-offs at night weights and temperatures.

In planning day's operations, a bracket of take-off runs is worked out from British Aerospace charts, using temperature and rpm corrections for individual engines, computed from periodic hover-performance checks, and an adjustment for the particular ship. *Invincible*, for example, gives better than expected short take-off performance, presumably because of upwash from the structure ahead of the ski-jump.

The BAe charts, as modified by Boscombe Down clearance, give the parameters for a "worst-case" take-off based on ensuring zero probability of a negative climb rate in the accelerating transition to wingborne flight. The charts provide the deck roll required, the engine nozzle angle required at unstick, and the resulting end-speed. This speed must be checked against the limit dictated by the vertical loading on the noseleg, which for a given ramp

curvature varies with the pitching of the ship.

Once the deck-run bracket has been calculated, the aircraft can be positioned for take-off. They may be parked in line with as little as 7.8m separating them, which results in some buffeting in the jet blast but no serious problems. At present a crosswind limit of 15kt is applied but trials on Hermes have already demonstrated that a 20kt crosswind causes no problems and it is possible that the clearance will in due course be raised to about this figure.

Take-off Procedure. For a deck-launched intercept, the theoretical minimum reaction time is two minutes (dictated by the time for alignment of the twin-gyroplatform), but the RN normally works to three minutes, allowing 30 seconds at either end of alignment for the pilot to strap in, start the engine and do his cockpit checks. Because of the emphasis on singleton operation, the RN has made no great effort to minimise launch interval, flying aircraft off with a separation of around 10 seconds. For comparison, the US Marine Corps plans to have the second aircraft start its roll as the first clears the bow, and so on.

The pilot checks engine acceleration between 27% and 55% fan rpm (approximately four seconds) with nozzles aft, then moves the nozzles down to the calculated angle for unstick to check bleed pressure in the reaction control ducts and to allow the FDO (flight-deck officer) to check that the nozzles reach the desired angle. The FDO also checks that the tailplane is set at the correct angle to suit the load configuration.

The aircraft accelerates along the deck between painted "tramlines", with the nozzles set at 8° below engine datum, which

gives the best possible horizontal thrust component without tailplane "buzz". As the deck edge disappears below the quarter-lights, the pilot selects the nozzles down to the preset stop, which should bring them to the required angle just as the nosewheel clears the deck.

The tailplane setting produces a trimmed angle of attack of 12 units, which is the optimum for transition. The manufacturer originally suggested that any tendency to over-control should be checked by a stick-positioning device, a piece of wire limiting aft movement of the control column, as in the naval F-4. The RN, however, has found this to be unnecessary, possibly because, in a ski-jump take-off, the aircraft never actually sinks, and the pilot simply "guards" the stick during transition.

The Sea Harrier comes off the Invincible's 7° ramp at a climb rate of 5.0-6.5m/s. Since the aircraft is well below the speed at which wing lift and vertical thrust component could support its weight, its vertical speed typically falls to around 1.5m/s before rising again. As the rate of climb begins to increase, the pilot progressively reduces the nozzle angle and completes transition to wingborne flight. In terms of airspeeds, minimum climb rate would typically be reached at 130kt and the transition would be completed at 165kt.

Landings. The way in which recovery is effected naturally depends on whether it is day or night, and on cloud base and visibility. Considering recovery first in the simple case of good daylight conditions with the ship steaming into wind, the aircraft begins by entering a "low-wait" orbit at a height of 1,000 ft. and an IAS of around 260 kt. The orbit is downwind of the ship and offset to port, so that the aircraft is ready to slot in to the landing pattern. On the downwind leg, the undercarriage and

flaps are selected and checked down, and the nozzles are lowered to 20° to check reaction-control duct pressure. Having turned on to the base leg, the pilot begins a descending, decelerating transition, progressively increasing nozzle angle to bring the aircraft to the hover abreast of the designated landing spot, the hover position being offset roughly 9 m to port and at height of 100 ft, i.e. approximately 40 ft., above deck level. This approach alongside the ship, rather than straight in over the stern, gives a better appreciation of movement and facilitates a safe overshoot (although overshoots rarely occur with the Sea Harrier). Having confirmed that the landing spot is clear, the aircraft is translated sideways and lowered gently on to the deck.

If the ship is not steering into wind, the same visual pattern is used, but in this case it is orientated to relative wind, rather than the ship's course. The only restrictions are that the Harrier must hover and land pointing into wind, and must avoid landing spots that are known to be subject to deck turbulence.

Considering next a bad-weather recovery at night, the initial approach to bring the aircraft within sight of the ship's visual landing aids may be carried out either as a CCA (carrier-controlled approach) or as a PIA (pilot-interpreted approach). In either case the aim is to guide the aircraft down a 3° glideslope, from a height of 1,000 feet at 3.3 n.m. to 200ft at 0.8 n.m. This phase is carried out in partially jetborne flight, with a nozzle angle of 60° and an airspeed in the region of 130 kt.

Neither Invincible nor Hermes has a dedicated CCA radar, but this method can nonetheless be carried out using the Type 1006 navigation radar. The controller on the ship gives the pilot azimuth corrections

and range data, from which the pilot can deduce his height error and adjust his glideslope accordingly. The CCA is frequently used and has the potential advantage that it could be used with various ships equipped with helicopter platforms, e.g. royal fleet auxiliaries.

The PIA can be carried out in three ways. First, the Blue Fox radar may be used to update the ship's position continuously computed in the aircraft's navigation system. The pilot then selects PIA on the HUD (head-up display), inserts the desired approach track and is presented with range data plus azimuth and height corrections. Alternatively, the same type of initial approach can be obtained directly from radar lock-on, rather than using the navigation system. Thirdly, within the next few years, transponder-equipped Sea Harriers will be able to make PIAs to ships equipped with MEL's Madge microwave aircraft digital guidance equipment.

On completion of the initial approach, the aircraft has slowed to around 120 kt and the pilot has the ship's visual approach aid in sight. He carries out a decelerating transition down a 2° 20 glideslope using the HAPI (Harrier Approach Path Indicator). Two sets of HAPI lights are mounted on the port deck edge, providing a stabilised red/white glideslope indication. Azimuth errors are eliminated by flying to keep the lights in line. The approach is monitored by the landing safety officer in the FLYCO (flying control) office on the port side of the island, using a stabilised HUD to compare aircraft position with the ideal glidepath.

At approximately 0.5 n.m. from the ship, the pilot brings the engine nozzles down to the hover stop and "sidesteps" the aircraft to port, passing the stern with an airspeed

of about 40 kt rather than the 140 kt of the F-4 or Buccaneer.

At this stage aircraft height is controlled by reference to the forward set of HAPI lights and a similar system termed CAI (Close-Approach Indicator) on the port side of the island. Throughout the final approach the deck will have been floodlit, although this is not readily visible to other ships. Positioning of the aircraft over its assigned landing spot is assisted by a so-called "Christmas tree" of lights mounted on the rear end of the island. This array consists of three lights in a vertical line, with a fourth on an extended arm pointed at the landing spot. By lining up the fourth light with the bottom light of the fixed array, the pilot knows (given a cross-reference such as the take-off tramlines) that he is in the correct position and at a suitable height to let down on to the deck.

Aside from Madge, other improvements in the pipeline include an autopilot for

use at airspeeds above 250 kt. This will help reduce cockpit workload, which is high in some phases of night operations such as radar intercepts at low level. Night instrument approaches, although less difficult than in a conventional aircraft, will benefit from an audio angle-of-attack system, recently evaluated in the BAe Hatfield simulator. A speed-trim facility will simplify positioning the aircraft at the hover by allowing the pilot to move the nozzles through 10° in either direction using the airbrake switch on the throttle, rather than having to move his hand to the nozzle selector level.

These and other modifications will further enhance the flight safety of the Sea Harrier, a technologically remarkable aircraft that, in the hands of the Royal Navy, has been developed into a very effective operational system.

The Mideast Arms Bazaar

Aimed At The Expanding Egyptian Market

A Large Number of Western defence equipment manufacturers gathered in recently Cairo for an exhibition aimed at displaying equipment and capabilities

to the Egyptian Armed Forces. Although the concept of such a geographically-limited exhibition could prove interesting, feelings were rather mixed at the end of the four-day event, especially among European exhibitors.

It can be said that the attendance at the show was a satisfactory one, demonstrating the high level of interest from the

different branches of the Egyptian Armed Forces towards the many types of defence equipment, for which Egypt is expected to invest large amounts of money in the years to come. Exhibitors were hoping to see a few more representatives from surrounding Middle East countries such as Sudan, Oman, etc. However, the tense climate only one month after President Sadat's assassination probably made it difficult for them to attend the event.

A general remark, heard from numerous exhibitors, was that exhibiting space prices were very high, especially when considering the limited comfort offered at the Egyptian Army facilities where the exhibition took place. For example, several French exhibitors had a hard time trying to attract some visitors to their booth, which was located on the second or third floor of army barracks. Another evident lack of professionalism on the organizational side was the regulation forbidding any distribution of specialized defence publications at the show other than the one published by the company sponsoring the exhibition.

On the positive side it can be said that the CMECO 81 came at the right time, i.e. during a period in which several large equipment contracts are being finalized with the Egyptian Armed Force. One day after the closure of the show it was learned that the Egyptian Government had signed a contract for the purchase of ten DHC-5 BUFFALO twin turboprop transport aircraft with the de Havilland Aircraft Co. of Canada. Total value of the contract is about 100 million Canadian dollars.

Italy also is about to provide about US \$300 million to Egypt for the procurement of the Oerikon/Contraves/Selenia SKY-GUARD/ASPIDO missile air de-

fence system. Egypt already operates the Thomson-CSF CROTALE surface-to-air missile system, and this Egyptian interest in the Swiss/Italian system shows once more the country's wish to diversify its supply sources for comparable systems.

This Egyptian policy also is illustrated by the strong interest in the Dassault-Breguet MIRAGE-2000 fighter, although the Egyptian Air Force is about to receive a substantial number of General Dynamics F-16 fighters.

A large French aerospace industry joint display was organized at the CMECO show. Egypt and France have been negotiating for nine months for the procurement of at least 40 aircraft with a follow-on order for an additional 40 units.

Most of the manufacturers in business relations with the Egyptian armed forces attended CMECO, as did also a very interesting group of Egyptian organizations specialized in defence equipment manufacture. These included the Arab American Vehicles Company, Arab British Dynamics, the 15 specialized state industries grouped as Egyptian Military Industries, and the Sakr Factory.

On the basis of the experience gained with this first defence exhibition in Egypt, a similar display will probably take place in the country in two or three years.

The Emergence of Middle East Aerospace Industry

Seven or eight years ago, Middle East countries began development of an aerospace and defence structure that should

have been the basis to fulfil their own needs. The new structure was centered around the AIO (Arab Industrialization Organization). The deal was rather fair: Saudi Arabia and the Emirates would have provided the money, Western countries would have provided the technology, and Egypt would have provided the relatively skilled labour as well as the necessary industrial infrastructure. At that time, huge programmes were envisioned: thousands of missiles, hundreds of helicopters and advanced combat aircraft were to have been produced and supplied to the member nations' armed forces.

The Camp David Peace Treaty, however, cancelled the whole programme. The Egyptian Government should be given credit: at that time, despite huge financial difficulties, it took over what could be saved of the programme, continuing to manufacture the systems that were already in production. Today, Egypt is the only licenced manufacturer of the British Aerospace SWINGFIRE anti-tank missile, which has already been exported to its Sudanese neighbour.

However, this was not enough to revive the Egyptian aerospace industry, though it already had a long tradition in the fifties with the development of the HELWAN fighter (with German assistance). More recently thanks to a cooperation agreement with the French aerospace industry, the group, now called the EIO (Egyptian Industrialization Organization) started production of some components for the MIRAGE-5, and the first parts of ALPHA JETs should soon come off the production line for assembly on the 35 units ordered by the Egyptian Air Force. On a medium term basis, Egypt is interested in participating in production of an advanced technology fighter and the Egyptian Defence Minister, Field Marshal Abu Ghazala, re-

cently stated to our companion magazine *Military Technology* that the MIRAGE-2000 is the most likely choice.

However, the remaining Arab nations did not remain passive during the last few years, and the Gulf Cooperation Council, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, is about to establish the basis for its own aircraft production capability. Various Western projects are being considered, the main effort presently being made by British Aerospace for a team of aircraft including the HAWK trainer and the P-1110 advanced STOL supersonic project. The latter would be developed with Saudi funds, allowing the British Aerospace industry to proceed with projects for which it presently has no available funds. The French have also made some very serious and attractive proposals.

At the same time, Iraq is looking to establish an aircraft industry of its own; the HAWK and the ALPHA JET are once more faced off in this competition which, in some cases, is very bitter. The favourite in the competition presently seems to be the ALPHA JET, but no agreement has been reached yet; Iraq is at war with Iran and this may lead to some international problems for its future industrial partners.

The simultaneous emergence of these various projects shows that Middle East countries do not want to remain only customers: they intend to use their years of a good financial situation thanks to their oil reserves to develop their own advanced technology capability and to become independent of their traditional suppliers as much as possible. The management of these projects should be very carefully watched: if successfully completed, these programmes might lead to a different type of relationship between Third World customer countries and the traditional Western indus-

tries. More than ever, the best asset of the Western industries is know-how.

The MX and American National Defence

September 1982

There is almost no question in the minds of nuclear strategists that the United States needs the MX intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). The question is: Which mode of deployment for the MX will be the most effective, least costly and quickest to implement to meet US defence requirements?

According to Professor Andrew C. Tuttle, chairman of the Department of Political Science, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, the only mode of MX deployment which meets all the above criteria is the Multiple Aimpoint System (MAPS). This mode of deployment, however, may not be under consideration because, if adopted, it would be in violation of the SALT-II accords. Are there any viable alternatives?

Tuttle discusses several alternatives and briefly discusses why the United States may now be presenting a "window of vulnerability" to the Soviets. In this regard, he believes this has occurred because the US arms control advocates sought peace and security through arms limitation treaties, accords and agreements while the Soviets were enhancing their strategic capabilities.

When the SALT process began in 1968, the United States held the strategic edge. By 1980, the Soviets had dramatically advanced their strategic capabilities and had deployed extremely accurate SS18 and SS19 ICBMs. They now have the capability

to put most of our Minuteman and Titan silos at risk.

The 200 MX ICBMs will be an effective deterrent force, but time is a critical factor. The deployment mode adds considerably to the time required to deploy the MX. Several alternative deployment modes are currently being considered.

Initially, the Air Force proposed and tentative presidential approval was given to a land-based mobile system called the "race-track." Under this proposal, each of the 200 MX missiles would be located in a large oval cluster of 23 vertical or horizontal protective shelters. This would overwhelm the Soviet capability by presenting 4,600 MX targets plus Minuteman, Titan and sea-launched ballistic missiles. In 1980, this system was shelved in favour of the "drag strip" or linear deployment mode. Although just as effective as the "race-track," it would save two billion dollars. Deployment of either system would take approximately 10 years following a go-ahead decision.

Another method of MX deployment is the Shallow Underwater Mobile (SUM) system. In this proposal, two MX missiles in waterproof containers would be strapped on the sides of small, slow-moving submarines. It would be less expensive than land basing and would not impact negatively upon the environment. The problem with SUM is that existing submarines and even sea-launched ballistic missile submarines, such as the Trident, would require extensive structural modifications. Deployment of this mode would be delayed until the 1990s.

MAPS is the most feasible deployment mode and would cut the "window of vulnerability" to a minimum. In this mode, several or as many as 23 vertical silos would

be built for each MX ICBM and integrated into the existing Minuteman force. This mode would present the Soviets with as many targets as the "race-track" basing, and deployment could be accomplished in a relatively short period of time. The existing command and control centers of the Minuteman sites would be used, and the cost of this system would be far less than either SUM or "race-track".

The primary problem with MAPS is that it is in violation of the SALT-II accords which counts missile launchers. But the world has changed since the signing of SALT-II, and the new administration has indicated its willingness to reopen arms limitations agreements. Rather than discarding MAPS, it should be considered since it may be consistent with future agreements.—
