Appendix A

Hidden Prize

By Lt Col. M Ziauddin

Today I wish to convey to the freedom fighters in particular and the people in general something which I feel is due to them and is being held back for very, very selfish motives by those in power. This independence has become an agony for the people for this country. Stand on the street and you see purposeless, spiritless, lifeless faces going through the mechanics of life. Generally after a liberation war the ‘new spirit’ carries the people through and the country builds itself out of nothing. For everyone life becomes a challenge, and they meet it fearlessly. In Bangladesh today the story is simply the other way round. The whole of Bangladesh is either begging or singing the sad songs or shouting without awareness. The whole country can be dissected into the various disjointed parts as follows:

a. The intellectuals are busy ‘hair splitting.’

b. Those who have read a little are engrossed in self-destructive criticism. They must have somebody to blame everyday, in the office or at home.

c. Those with a little money are making the best out of what they can, but they, too, are feeling unsteady.

d. Those in administration are trying to run a redundant system, that is holding back ‘progress’.

e. Those in power have already compromised the national sovereignty and are busy guarding the nation’s ‘prize’.

f. The hungry and the poor are totally lost and are begging charity. The so-called ‘friends’ of Bangladesh are showing sympathy and are exploiting them for a mean end.

This country is on the verge of falling into the abyss. Everyone has to be united, infused with pride and made to ‘move’. Talking about pride, what has happened to our pride? Did we have it? Have we lost it or is it hidden? In this case, the nation’s pride remains hidden in ‘secret treaty’. We had pride and we found it on 26th March. Those who are signatories to it must give it out to the people. The prize belongs to them. Those who know of such a treaty must tell the people that there is such an act of ‘betrayal’. If they do not do it, they are enemies of the people and the freedom fighters have a right to demand it. All outward manifestations of that treaty in any form are trying to guard what belongs to the people. They, too, are enemies of the people. If the Bangabandhu loves his people he must let the people know. Why should he be afraid? We fought without him and won, and now if need be, we will fight again. Nothing can beat us. We can be destroyed but not defeated.

Source: Holiday, August 20, 1972.
APPENDIX B

THE BANGLADESH GAZETTE

Extraordinary
Published by Authority
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 1975
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
MINISTRY OF LAW, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE
(Law and Parliamentary Division)
NOTIFICATION
Dhaka, the 26 September, 1975

No. 692- The following ordinance made by the president of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the 26th September, 1975, is hereby published for general information:

THE INDEMNITY ORDINANCE, 1975
Ordinance No. XIX of 1975

ORDINANCE

to restrict the taking of any legal or other proceedings in respect of certain acts or things done in connection with, or in preparation execution of any plan for, or steps necessitating, the historical change and the proclamation of Martial Law on the morning of the 15th August, 1975.

Whereas it is expedient to restrict the taking of any legal or other proceedings in respect of certain acts or things done in connection with or in preparation or execution of any plan for, or steps necessitating, the historical change and the proclamation of Martial Law on the morning of the 15th August, 1975:

And whereas parliament is not in session and president is satisfied that circumstances exist which render immediate action necessary;

Now, therefore, in pursuance of the proclamation of the 20th August, and in exercise of the conferred by clause (1) of article 93 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the president is pleased to make and promulgate the following Ordinance:—

1. Short title. This Ordinance may be called the Indemnity Ordinance, 1975.

2. Restrictions on the taking of any legal to other proceedings against persons in respect of certain acts and thing ... (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law, including a law relating to any defence service, for the time being in force, no suit, prosecution or other proceedings, legal or disciplinary, shall lie, or be taken, in before or by any Court, including
the Supreme Court and court Martial, or other authority against any person including a
person who is or has, at any time, been subject to any law relating to any defence service, for
on account of or in respect of any act, matter or thing done or step taken by such person in
connection with, or in preparation or execution or any plan for, or as necessary step towards,
the change of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the proclamation of

(2) For the purposes, of this section, a certificate by the president, or a person authorised
by him in this behalf that any act, matter or thing was done or step taken by any person
mentioned in the certificate in connection. With, of in preparation or execution of any plan
for, or necessary step towards, the change of Government of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh and the proclamation of Martial Law on morning of the 15th August, 1975, shall
be sufficient evidence of such act, matter or thing having been done or step having been
taken in connection with or in preparation or execution of any plan for, or as necessary step
towards, the change of such Government and the proclamation of Martial Law on that
morning.

Dhaka

KHANDAKER MOSHTAQUR AHMED
President

The 26th September 1975

M.H. Rahman
Secretary

Source: Abu Sayeed, *General Ziar Rajatto* (Dhaka: Jgyankosh Prakashani, 1994),
APPENDIX C

POLITICAL PARTIES REGULATION, 1976

Martial Law Regulation No.XXII of 1976

WHEREAS it is expedient to make a Martial Law Regulation for the purposes hereinafter appearing:

Now, THEREFORE, in pursuance of the Proclamations of the 20th August, 1975, and the 8th November, 1975, and in exercise of all powers enabling him in that behalf, the Chief Martial Law Administrator is pleased to make the following Regulations:

1. Short title and commencement - This Regulation may be called the Political Parties Regulation 1976.

2. Definitions:- In this Regulation, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context -

(a) "candidate" means a candidate seeking election to an elective body including Parliament;

(b) "Election Commission" means the Election Commission within the meaning of the Constitution;

(c) "foreign aided party" means a political party which -

(i) has been formed or organised, at the instance of any Government or political party of a foreign country; or

(ii) is affiliated to, or associated with, any Government or political party of a foreign country; or

(iii) receives any aid, financial or otherwise, towards its funds or for activities of a political nature from any Government of political party of a foreign country or from the nationals of a foreign country;

(d) "political party" means any association or body of individuals which pursues, or is engaged in, any activity with political purpose including propagation of any political opinion and includes any affiliated, associated or front organisation, such as, student, labour, cultural, peasant and youth organisation, of such association or body;

(e) "prejudicial activity" means any activity, which is intended or is likely -

(i) to prejudice the defence of Bangladesh;

(ii) to prejudice or endanger public safety or the maintenance of public order;
(iii) to create or excite feelings of enmity or hatred between different communities, classes or sections of people;

(iv) to interfere with, or encourage or incite interference with, the administration of law and maintenance of law and order;

(v) to prejudice the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community;

(vi) to cause fear or alarm to the public or to any section of the public;

(vii) to interfere with the industrial peace and economic development or to prejudice the economic or financial interests of the State;

(viii) to vitiate the academic atmosphere or the smooth functioning of educational institutions or to encourage political activity by, or indiscipline among, students;

(ix) to seduce any officer or other member of any Defence Service of Bangladesh Rifles or of any police force or of the Ansars from his duty or allegiance to Government;

(x) to generate or foster any personality-cult around any person, living or dead.

Formation of certain political parties prohibited- (1) No foreign aided party shall be formed, organised set up or convened nor shall any person be a member of, or associate himself with, any foreign party.

(2) No political party shall be formed with the object of engaging in any prejudicial activity or in any activity, including propagation of any opinion, which is prejudicial to the independence, sovereignty, integrity of Bangladesh.

Commencement of political activity—(1) Every political party shall, before it operates or commences its activity, submit to Government;

(a) the constitution setting out the aims and objects, the organisational structure at all levels, the method of selection of the office bearers, the source of funds, procedure of financing the activities of the party and provision for annual audit of its accounts and publication of audit report;

(b) a list of its affiliated, associated or front organisations specifying the name and the field of activity of each such organisation;

(c) the manifesto and programme of the party laying down its plan of social and economic development of the people and its proposals for legislative, executive and administrative measures, clearly indicating the feasibility of implementing or executing such programme in a lawful manner and its expectations as to the effect of the implementation of the programme on the well-being of the people;

(2) Upon receipt of the Constitution, list and manifesto and programme of political party submitted under sub-paragraph (1), the Government shall within, it fulfils the requirements of
this Regulation for operating as a political party; [and the decision of the Government whether or not a political party has fulfilled the requirement of this Regulation shall be final and shall not be called in question in or before any court or other authority.]

(3) No political party shall operate or commence its activity until it has received a communication under sub-paragraph (2) that it fulfills the requirements of this Regulation.

(4) The Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, declare that during any period specified in the notification no such documents as are referred to in sub-paragraph (1) shall be received or entertained by the Government.

5. Underground activity and armed cadre prohibited: (1) No political party shall -

(i) maintain any secret or underground organisation, group or agency, or engage in any secret or underground activity; or

(b) organise or maintain any armed cadre, volunteer corps or any other organisation, by whatever name called, which is intended or is likely to operate like a disciplined force.

(ii) Where a political party contravenes the provisions of sub-paragraph (1) it shall be liable to be proceeded against under paragraph 10.

6. Conditions for receiving payment, etc: (1) No political party shall receive any payment by way of subscription, contribution, donation or otherwise from any person or institution without giving such person or institution a printed and serialised receipt signed by an office-bearer of the party authorised to receive such payment; nor shall any person make to any political party any payment by way of subscription, contribution, donation or otherwise without obtaining such receipt.

(2) Where a political party receives any payment in contravention of sub-paragraph (1), it shall be liable to be proceeded against under paragraph 10.

(3) Where any person receives on behalf of a political party, or makes to a political party, any payment in contravention of the provisions of sub-paragraph (1), he shall be liable to be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extended to three years, or with fine or with both.

7. Funds to be operated through Bank account: (1) All funds of a political party shall be maintained and operated through a Scheduled Bank.

(2) Where a political party maintains or operates its funds in contravention of sub-paragraph (1), it shall be liable to be proceeded against under paragraph 10.

8. Conditions for contesting elections. No political party shall contest elections to any elective body, including Parliament, or put up or nominate any candidate, or hold out any candidate as its nominee, at such election unless it has, before nominating any candidate, submitted to the Election Commission -
(a) an election manifesto laying down its proposals for legislative, executive and administrative measures for the implementation of the party programme with statements explaining the rationale and feasibility of such measures.

(b) a statement specifying the number of candidates it proposed to nominate for the purpose of the election the extent of campaign expenditure which it proposes to incur for the purpose of election and the source of the funds for such expenditure.

9. **Prohibition of certain acts:** No political party contesting the election shall -

(a) make or publish, or cause to be made or published, a statement leaflet or poster of any kind whatsoever causing any reflection on the activities of any other political party or the personal character of any candidate of such other party except by way of objective criticism, without exciting hatred or contempt, of the aims, objects and programme of such other party or candidate;

(b) permit, at any meeting, procession or demonstration held or organised by it, the making by any person of any speech of statement of the nature referred to in clause(a);

(c) organise or encourage or assist in organising, any procession or demonstration calculated to disrupt or obstruct the holding or conduct of any meeting of any other political party or any candidate of such other party;

(d) use or threaten to use force or violence for the purpose of securing support of the voters for its candidates or of alienating the voters from any other political party or the candidates of such party.

10. **Proceedings for certain contraventions:** (1) Where the Government has reason to believe that a political party has contravened any of the provisions of paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 or any order of the Election Commission under paragraph 11, it may refer the matter for decision to a Tribunal consisting of a Judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court nominated for the purpose by the Chief Justice of that Court; and upon such reference the political party concerned shall suspend its operation or activity until the Tribunal has given its decision on the reference.

(2) Upon a reference under sub-paragraph (1), the Tribunal shall, after considering all facts and evidence furnished by Government and giving the political party concerned an opportunity of being heard, give its decision, so far as may be within a period not exceeding one month from the date of the reference, whether or not such political party has contravened any of the provisions of paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 or any order of the Election Commission under paragraph 11.

(3) Where the Tribunal has given a decision that a political party has contravened any of the provisions of paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 or any order of the Election Commission under paragraph 11, the decision shall be published in the official Gazette; and thereupon the political party concerned shall stand dissolved and all its properties and funds shall stand forfeited to Government.
11. **Penalty for contravention of paragraphs 8 and 9:** (1) Where a political party contests an election or puts up or nominates any candidate at an election without complying with the requirements of paragraph 8, or incurs for its election campaign any expenditure in excess of the amount specified in the statement submitted under that paragraph, or commits any act in contravention of paragraph 9, the Election Commission may, after giving the political party an opportunity of being heard, by order, direct the suspension of that party for a period not exceeding two years; and thereupon the political party shall cease all its activities for the period specified in the order.

(2) A political party which continues its activities in contravention of an order made under sub-paragraph (1) shall, if the Tribunal mentioned in paragraph 10, upon a reference made to it, so funds, stand dissolved and all its properties and funds shall stand forfeited to Government.

(3) Where any office-bearer of a political party commits any act which would subject the party, if it were committed by it, to the liability under sub-paragraph (1), that political party shall be deemed to have committed the act unless it proves that the act was done without the knowledge of such of the office-bearers or such majority of them as are competent to take decision on behalf of the party or that they took all reasonable precautions to prevent the commission of such act.

12. **Penalty for candidates in certain cases** - Without prejudice to the operation of any other law applicable thereto, a candidate at an election shall be deemed to be guilty, in the case of election to Parliament, of corrupt practice within the meaning of the Representation of the People Order, 1972 (P.O.No. 155 of 1972), and in the case of election to any other elective body, of such practice as disqualifies a candidate for election to such body if he -

(a) without being a nominee of a political party holds himself out to be a candidate of, or to have been nominated by, that party;

(b) after a political party has been dissolved under paragraph 10 or suspended under paragraph 11, holds himself out to be a candidate of, or to have been nominated by, that party; or

(c) for the purpose of, or in the course of the campaign for, his election, commits any such act as is referred to in paragraph 9 which would subject a political party, if it were committed by it, to the liability under sub-paragraph (1) paragraph 11.

13. **Conditions for candidature at election:** (1)Notwithstanding anything contained in the Representation of People Order, 1972 (P.O.No.155 of 1972), or in any other law for the time being in force relating to elections to any elective body, no candidate shall seek election or submit or cause or consent to be submitted any proposal or nomination paper for election to any elective body, including Parliament, except after he has submitted --

(a) in the case of an election to Parliament to the Election Commission an election manifesto which shall state his commitment to protect and maintain independence, sovereignty, integrity and security of Bangladesh and his proposals for legislative, executive and administrative measures for social and economic development of the people;
(b) in the case of an election to any other elective body, to the authority responsible for conducting the election, a memorandum stating so far as is relevant in relation to such elective body, the matters referred to in clause (a).

(2) A candidate who contests an election without complying with the requirements of sub-paragraph (1) shall be guilty in the case of election to Parliament, of corrupt practice within the meaning of the Representation of People Order, 1972 (P.O.No.155 of 1972), and in the case of election to any other elective body, of such practice as disqualifies a candidate for election to such body.

14. **Regulation of political activity** – (1) Government may, from time to time, by order, regulate the activities, including election campaign, of any political party in such manner as it may deem fit.

(2) A political party which contravenes any order made under sub-paragraph (1) shall be deemed to have contravened the provisions of paragraph (11) and shall be liable to be suspended in accordance with the provisions of that paragraph.

15. **Power to make rules** - The Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Regulation and such rules may, among other matters, provide for the investigation of the sources of funds of a political party and audit by any officer or agency of the accounts of such party.

16. **Regulation to override other laws** - This Regulation shall have effect notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force.

17. **Repeal** - The Political Parties Act, 1962 (III of 1962), and the Political Parties (Prohibition) Ordinance 1975 (XLVI of 1975), are hereby repealed.

APPENDIX- D

ZIA’S 19-POINT PROGRAMME

1. To preserve the country's independence, integrity and sovereignty at all costs.
2. To reflect the four fundamental principles of the constitution in all spheres of national life.
3. To make the nation self-reliant in every possible way.
4. To ensure the participation of the people at every level of the administration, in development programmes and in the maintenance of order.
5. To strengthen the economy by accordimg top priority to agricultural development.
6. To ensure that no one went hungry, by making the country self-sufficient in food.
7. To ensure clothing for everyone, by increasing cloth production.
8. To take all possible measures to ensure that no one remained homeless.
9. To rid the country of illiteracy.
10. To ensure a minimum level of medical care for everyone.
11. To give women their rightful place in society and to organise and inspire the young for building the nation.
12. To give necessary incentives to the private sector for the economic development of the country.
13. To improve the workers' conditions and to develop healthy labour-management relations in the interests of increased production.
14. To encourage the spirit of public service and nation-building among government employees and to improve their financial situation.
15. To check population explosion.
16. To establish friendship with all countries on a basis of equality and especially to strengthen relations with Muslim countries.
17. To decentralise the system of administration and develop and strengthen local government.
18. To establish a social order based on justice and free from corruption.
19. To safeguard the rights of all citizens irrespective of religion, colour and sect and to consolidate national unity and solidarity.

Following is the full text of the statement released to the media by Chief of Army Staff Lt. General H. M. Ershad on November 28, 1981:

My attention has been drawn towards my talks with a few journalists sometime ago in which I talked on the role of the military. It is evident from various press reportings and comments that the question of the role of the military in our society is being discussed widely as a national issue. But the matter has not yet been dealt with in depth and in clear terms.

Actually, there has not been a scope as yet. As such the correct national perspective is often lost sight of during such discussions. At times it verges on narrow partisan outlook; at times it amounts to villifying and undermining a vital national institution; and at times unintentionally though, rumours and misgivings are generated which only serve anti-national and anti-people purpose.

This is unfortunate, definitely harmful and against national interest. I sincerely believe that this is due to a communication gap and lack of necessary details. Communication with the national press and furnishing of some details will help remove misunderstanding on such a vital matter. For example, questions have been raised, as to what the C. A. S means by role of the military in our democratic country? This is a valid point which needs to be answered.

Some people having no understanding of military affairs and the gravity of our problems have on their own given some self-made explanations denouncing our patriotic Armed Forces. They are saying that we are preventing the democratic process; that we want to share power with the government; that the Armed Forces have become ambitious and many such allegations are being circulated. All these are likely to subvert the excellent relationship between the people and the Armed Forces.

Having successfully upheld the democratic process, having set the glorious democratic tradition, and immediately after the successful elections, unnecessary concern is being created amongst the people, concern to the extent that there may be a confrontation between the President and the military.

This is totally baseless, I have high regards for the Honourable President. Have we not always strengthened democracy and the institution of the President? Inshallah, we will continue to do so in future also.

I am a soldier and not a politician. By now, I have proved that I want to remain a soldier. I have no personal ambition. What I am doing by raising the question of the role of the military is that I am doing some straight talk about a very grave and deep seated, POLITICO-MILITARY problem. I hope that our politicians sincerely try to comprehend the grave nature and the vast dimension of this problem in our body politic and military.
It is not a question of sharing power; it is not a question of my being given a cabinet post or rank; it is not a question of our generals and brigadiers getting benefits of rank and status: it is not a question of our officers and men exercising power over their civilian counterpart. No. Not at all. These are trifle matters, matters of modalities and making suitable organizational structures to help execution of national policy decisions. If the government deems it necessary in the public interest they might as well do it.

What is important is the fundamental concept of recognizing the politico-military problems and finding permanent solutions in a constitutional approach. Our rank had file do not want military adventurism in politics nor do they want political adventurism in the military. They only want to be with the people helping build democracy, help build effective checks and balances against any future coup attempts. I will further elaborate this point later.

As for me, it is immaterial as to what happens to me. As a patriotic soldier, and the Chief of Staff who has steered the army through thick and thin, I cannot be failing to project the problems that I have projected. This is in the national interest; shallow interpretation, undermining military institutions and not telling the bitter truth amounts to deceiving our people.

We must face facts and look into the problems in depth. It is a serious matter, it has far-reaching effects in ensuring democracy for ever if we can give a proper place to the military in our society. During the rest of my term as CAS, Inshallah, there will be no coups; but what you must do is to find constitutional solutions so that coups and killings do not take place 5 years later or 10 years later or ever again. You see, what is at stake are peace, stability, permanence of democracy and the existence of our nation.

**POTENTIAL**

To this end let us now broadly look at the role of Armed Forces. This is an Armed Force which unlike other armed forces have fought alongside our people and liberated the country. Thus the relationship of our people and the military are deeply ingrained. We are truly an armed force of the people, and not a colonial armed force. Experience of the last 10 years have shown that no one has succeeded in keeping our soldiers aloof from the society and its turmoil. It just can not be done.

In fact, none should take the military as a mere service, it is much more than that. Our military is an efficient, well-disciplined, most honest body of truly dedicated and organized national force. Potentials of such an excellent force in a poor country like ours can be effectively utilized for productive and nation-building purposes in addition to its role of national defense.

Late President Ziaur Rahman gave us such an excellent concept. I was in total agreement with his concept which I would very much like to carry forward. This concept requires us to depart from the conventional Western ideas of the role of the armed forces. It calls for combining the role of national defense into one concept of total national defense.

I visualize that we cannot afford enough money needed to procure sufficient military hardware, armaments and weapon systems. This economic constraint has imposed a serious limitation of lack of sufficient firepower in our defense efforts.
The only way to remove this limitation is to effectively substitute a vast manpower in place of firepower. As such, to build a strong army capable of defending our frontiers we will need hundreds of thousands of trained soldiers. When we do train them, over a number of years, after completion of training what do we want them to do? — keep them sitting in the barracks?

No, we can effectively employ them for nation building purposes. They can get trained, undergo national service for a few years and then return to their civilian jobs and employment. Thus over the years, practically in every walk of life, we will have people with sufficient military training to take part in national defense in the modern battle field. Thus, without strain on our economic development; in times of need, we will be able to mobilize the total national efforts towards national defense.

The petty talks that military people are taking away civilian jobs is thus utter nonsense, since in such a national military concept most of the able-bodied people will become military. There will be very little or no difference between civil and military.

There are many things in this concept of total defense which need a thorough study by knowledgeable and well informed people in matters of national defense and national strategy. The question of organization, role, functioning and effectiveness of a National Security Council or Defense Council comes within this purview so that strategically vital questions of national interest can be evaluated, correct decision taken, and policy direction given to the executive from the highest national level. This cannot be effectively done without appropriate constitutional provision for in depth co-ordination at the highest level.

COMMITTEE

In this short span of time and place it is not possible for me to go into greater details. Gradually the concept will crystalize, hopefully, as it is studied keeping in view the national perspective. Suffice it to say that there will have to be constitutional provisions made and administrative measures worked out to define clearly the role of the military in our society. I have suggested that this question may be placed before a presidential committee for in depth study. Such a committee may include ministers, MPs and military experts on the subject.

In no way have I asked for a share of power. The contention that the Armed Force is interfering in the democratic process is also baseless. Such opinions are distorted interpretation of what I have said. By now there is no doubt in people’s mind as to what the Bangladesh Armed Forces stand for — it stands for the democratic and constitution process. It is needless to say how the valiant and patriotic Armed Forces have upheld the glorious democratic tradition through the most crucial times.

The example of non-interference in the constitutional process, that the Army has now set will always make it difficult for any adventurist to violate in near future. What I have said, and what I sincerely feel, is a national need to find a permanent solution and prevent re-occurrence of coups and killings. Therefore, we have to take into serious account the causes, problems and difficulties of our officers and men vis-à-vis the socio-economic and political problems of the people. This is what I call the politico-military problems.
Unless I tell you all about it, all the bitter truth, I will be failing in my national duties. Hiding it will mean deceiving our people. The people are the tax payers – they are maintaining their Armed Forces and they have a right to be told as to what is happening in their Armed Forces. And who else can say it more authentically than the Chiefs of Staff of the services? This is in perfect harmony with democratic traditions. Is it wrong or is it a crime for us soldiers to say that we want the problems to be solved, that we want an honest and effective government that we want the government and administration to crusade against corruption?

Yes, it would have been a crime in a colonial country, but surely not in our free country. More so, not wrong for the Army which has actively fought liberation war to make this country free. In fact, since then, since 1971 till today, the fast moving politico-military events have left a very deep impression in the minds of our soldiers. The rank and file have undergone a traumatic experience, suffered tremendous tensions, military justice has taken heavy tolls regardless of rank and status — all these are bound to heavily underline their awareness of national affairs, sense of justice, eradication of corruption and their hopes and aspirations of true democracy.

PROBLEMS

The problem is that so far we have not taken cognizance of these problems in the military and find ways and means to solve them. In fact, under the present conventional set up it cannot be done. Having identified this problem, I have proposed that it must be recognized as a deep-rooted problem, and to find solutions, devise necessary provisions to incorporate in the constitution.

President Zia used to say, “We have to build democracy”. Yes, we have to build it. Mere rhetorics only create façade of democracy, 34 years of rhetorics have not been able to build democratic institutions. We really have to build democracy in this country, and may I say – please take your Armed Forces fully into confidence. Let them feel that they are also part and parcel of the democratic process and thus let the people help soldiers thwart adventurism. Such constitutional position exists in the constitutions of many countries of the world which you all are aware of.

Finally, I would like to say that I have left the matter to the Honourable President for him to take steps as he deems fit. And I have full faith in him.

As I conclude I would like to thank you for giving me a patient hearing. I personally have tremendous faith in our national press. I would only request you to kindly look at the problems and issues of the military from an understanding and national point of view. May I urge upon you, please do not allow anyone to mislead our people about their armed forces or tamper with this nationally vital institution or undermine their prestige. A nation which does not respect its soldiers cannot respect its sovereignty and independence.

Source: *Holiday*, December 8, 1981
Appendix F

TEXT OF ERSHAD’S ADDRESS TO
THE NATION ON MARCH 24, 1982

The following is the full text of the address to the nation of the Chief Martial Law Administrator Lt. General H.M. Ershad:

"Bismillahir Rahmaner Rahim,

My Dear countrymen, Assalamu Alaikum.

I have come before you at the most critical moment of 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. The Constitution has been suspended for some time.

I have assumed as Chief Martial Law Administrator and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. 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 its 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 was threatened due to social and political indiscipline, unprecedented corruption, devasted economy, administrative stalemate, extreme deterioration of law and order and frightening economic and food crisis.

No Confidence

The Government was rendered totally ineffective and unsuccessful because of the meanness, inefficiency, favouritism, limitless corruption and internecine quarrel 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 fulfill people's hopes and aspirations. Because the same old people were incorporated in the Cabinet and there were great doubt 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 achieve their desired objective that is it would be helpful to set up a powerful government of corruption free, honest 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 is 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 limit for personal aggrandisement. This resulted in serious instability in the social and political fields.

No Covert Support

Of late, a 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 impression 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 the 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 may 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 given 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 quarter. As a result, the mask of the corrupt Government fell before the people and which compelled the Government to take next steps.

Economy

You all know that the national economy is today fully ruined and consequently the economic salvation of the commonman 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 the stopped. On the other hand, rampant looting, misuse of power and wealth continued 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, araitars and profiteers. The lack of farsightness and failure in taking timely measures by the Government also pushed the country into a serious food and economic crisis.

The local and foreign businessmen 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-fulfillment of their hopes.

Frustration

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 an unparallel internal conflicts for their personal gain.
The people’s representatives who were voted to power have engaged themselves in palace conspiracy of 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.

Leadership

Dear countrymen,

Our people are basically patriotic and honest. If they get calm, hardworking and able leadership, they could ride the crest of fame. They have proved their worth under the able and dynamic leadership of late leader 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 time of national crisis. Because, it had been proved earlier especially after the incident of May 30.

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 was becoming unbearable gradually at the hands of extremely corrupt and dishonest persons.

Armed Forces

The members of the Armed Forces who are firmly determined to continue the democratic process kept silent so long even at the frustrating and disastrous situation because of their firm confidence in democratic values. So the member of the Armed Forces remained patient like the civilian brothers.

They also hoped that the Government elected by their 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 don’t 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.
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 shall 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, Inshallah we would be able to face the challenge. We can no longer sit idle in this tragic circumstances and crisis.

Helplessness

A judge of the Bangladesh Supreme Court in his speech at the installation ceremony of Chhatra Union of Dacca University on March 16 said that social life has reached such a stage where one’s 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 the 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 if we fail to challenge it with courage, 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 no remedies to them.

The country is submerged by the tide of corruption and we are either looking at it helplessly or owing ourselves to be carried by that tide. Such a situation could not be allowed to continue. Today we are determined to change this situation. In such a situation our role of silent spectators or remaining idle would amount to betrayal to the country and the people.

No Political Ambition

In this context, I want to categorically declare before you that never 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 my earnest and main desire is to restore democracy in the country. But that democracy has to be consistent with the hopes and aspiration of the people, capable of meeting their demands.

It will be such a democracy through which the people would be able to participate actively and rally in all the national activities. Through this democracy the people will get such a representative Government which is made by them alone. For them and devoted to their welfare.

If we all work unitedly and sincerely then Inshallah we will not be delayed in achieving that target. Our principal objective would be to hold general elections in the country as soon as possible for restoring a congenial atmosphere. I firmly believe that the 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 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 countrymen.

**Democracy**

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 such a healthy political atmosphere where 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 ideals of patriotism, honesty, devotion 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 out 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.

**Land Reform**

A congenial atmosphere has to be developed for the private entrepreneurs. 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 programme 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.

**Corruption**

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 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 for all by building a strong popular resistance against it.

There have been many incidents of agitations, movements, *gheraos*, 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 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 county has seriously suffered. An impasse has been created in the economic activities. That is why, from now onward all types of agitational 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 expenditures.
Law and Order

You all know that the agencies responsible for maintenance of law and order were made lifeless and ineffective either for personal or more 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 perform. That is, restoration of the sacred atmosphere of education in the campus by freeing it of 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 the politics for realising their base personal interests.

In the name of students 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.

Liberation War

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 the independence.

The people came forward to establish an independent and sovereign state staking their own lives. You are all 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 at. Ensuring the reflection of the religion in the individual and collective lives was also one of the main objectives of the Liberation War.

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 dream 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.

**Ziaur Rahman**

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 farsighted 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 objective 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, racialism, aggression and expansionism.

**Foreign Policy**

We shall honour all the international and regional agreements and understanding with Bangladesh. I have the confidence that the bonds of friendship with the Organization 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 no domination.

**Appeal**

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, fair play 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 nation 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.

Appendix G

Martial Law Proclamation Order, 1982

The text of the Martial Law Proclamation Order, issued by Ershad on March 24, 1982 is as follows:

"I, Lieutenant General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, with the help and mercy of Almighty Allah and blessings of our great patriotic people, do hereby take over and assume all and full powers of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh with immediate effect from Wednesday, 24th March as Chief Martial Law Administrator of the People's Republic Bangladesh and I do hereby declare that the whole of Bangladesh shall be under Martial Law with immediate effect. Along with assumption of powers of Chief Martial Law Administrator I do hereby assume the full command and control of all the Armed Forces of Bangladesh.

All Powers

In exercise of all powers enabling me in this behalf I, Lieutenant General Hussain Muhammad Ershad do hereby further declare that:

I have assumed and entered upon the office of the Chief Martial Law Administrator with effect from Wednesday, 24th March, 1982.

I may nominate any person as President of the country at any time and who shall enter upon the office of the President after taking oath before the Chief Justice of Bangladesh or any Judge of the Supreme Court designated by me. I may rescind or cancel such nomination from time to time and nominate another person as the President of Bangladesh.

The President so nominated by me shall be the Head of State and act on and in accordance with my advice as Chief Martial Law Administrator and perform such functions as assigned to him by me.

(1) I may make, from time to time Martial Law Regulations orders and instructions among others providing for setting up of Special Military Courts, Tribunals and Summary Military courts for the trial and punishment of any regulations or orders or for contravention thereof and of offence under any other law.

(2) Prescribing penalties for offences under such regulations or orders or for contravention thereof and special penalties for offences under any other law.

(3) Empowering any court or tribunal to try and punish and offence under such regulation or order or the contravention thereof.

(4) Barring the jurisdiction of any court or tribunal from trying any offence specified in such Martial Law regulations or orders and

(5) On any other subject or in respect of any subject or matter specified regulated by or provided in any other law.
I may rescind the declaration of Martial Law made by this proclamation at any time either in respect of whole of Bangladesh or any part thereof and may again place whole of Bangladesh or any part thereof under Martial Law by a fresh declaration.

This proclamation and the Martial Law regulations and orders and other orders and instructions made by me in pursuance thereof shall have the effect notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force.

Constitution Suspended

The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh shall stand suspended with immediate effect.

All Acts, Ordinances, President’s orders and other orders, proclamations, rules, regulations, by-laws, notifications and other legal instruments in force on the morning of Wednesday, 24th March, 1982 shall continue to remain in force until repealed, revoked or amended.

The judges of the Supreme Court including the Chief Justice, Attorney General, Chief Election Commissioner, Election Commissioner or Commissioners, Chairman and members of the Public Service Commission, the Controller and Auditor General and others in the service of the Republic will continue to function.

All proceedings arising out of and in connection with Writ Petitions under Article 102 of the suspended constitution shall abate.

No court, including the Supreme Court or tribunal or authority shall have any power to call in question in any manner whatsoever or declare illegal or void this proclamation or any Martial Law regulation or order or other order made by me in pursuance thereof, or any declaration made by or under this proclamation, or mentioned in this proclamation to have been made, on anything done or any action taken by or under this proclamation or mentioned in this proclamation to have been done or taken or anything done or any action taken by or under any Martial Law regulation or order or other order made by me in pursuance of this proclamation.

Subject to the provisions aforesaid all courts, including Supreme Court in existence immediately before this proclamation shall continue to function but subject to the provisions of Martial Law regulation orders or other orders made by me.

Martial Law regulations and orders and other orders and instructions shall be made by the Chief Martial Law Administrator.

Advisors

There shall be a Council of Advisers/Council of Ministers to aid and advise the Chief Martial Law Administrator in the exercise of his functions. The Advisers shall be appointed by the Chief Martial Law Administrator and they shall hold the office during his pleasure.

An Adviser may resign his office under his hand addressed to the Chief Martial Law Administrator. The Chief Martial Law Administrator shall be the Chief Executive and head of government.
The persons holding office as President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Deputy Ministers, Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Chief Whip and Whips immediately before this proclamation shall be deemed to have been ceased to hold office with immediate effect.

The Council of Ministers and the Parliament which existed before this proclamation shall stand dissolved with immediate effect.


However, the Chief Martial Law Administrator may delegate his power of appointing sub-zonal and district martial law administrators to the zonal martial law administrators. They shall exercise such powers and perform such functions which may be assigned to them by me from time to time.

I do hereby appoint:-

A.P. No. 3 Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali Khan, Chief of Naval Staff and B.BD/4295 Air Vice Marshal Sultan Mahmud BU, Chief of Air Staff as Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrators.

I do hereby divide whole of Bangladesh into five Martial Law Zones in the following manner:-

Zone “A” Civil Districts of Dhaka, Dhaka Metropolitan City, Mymensingh, Tangail and Jamalpur.

“B” : Bogra, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Rajshahi and Pabna.

“C” : Chittagong. Chittagong Hill Tracts and Bandorban.

“D” : Comilla, Noakhali and Shylhet.

“E” : Jessore, Khulna, Kushtia, Barisal, Patuakhali and Faridpur.

And appoint Zonal Martial Law Administrators as follows:

Zone “A” : BA-121 Major General Mohammad Abdur Rahman, General Officer Commanding 9 Infantry Division.


“C”: BA-112 Major General Abdul Mannaf, General Officer RYT Division, Commanding 24th SFA.

Zone “D”: BA-132 Major General Mohammad Abdus Samad, General Officer Commanding 33 Infantry Division

Zone E: BA-187 Brigadier K.M. Abdul Wahed Officiating Commander 55 Infantry Division.
They shall hold the office during the pleasure of Chief Martial Law Administrator and shall be responsible for the effective enforcement of Martial Laws and maintenance of law and order in their respective areas.

This proclamation Martial Law regulations, orders and other orders instructions made by me during their continuance shall be the supreme law of the country and if any other law is inconsistent with them that other law shall to the extent of incompetency be void.

I may by order notified in the official Gazette to end this proclamation.

Lieutenant General Commander-in Chief Bangladesh Armed Forces and Chief Martial Law Administrator (Hussain Muhammad Ershad).

APPENDIX H

ACTION PLAN FOR DEMOCRACY

The following is the joint statement of the leaders of the political parties of Bangladesh—the eight-party, seven-party and five-party alliances on November 19, 1990, demanding the resignation of President Ershad and the establishment of an interim caretaker government:

For the establishment of full democracy and democratic rule - along the streams of consciousness set by our struggle for independence - by emancipating the country from the rule of dictator Ershad and his government propped up by means of killings, coup and conspiracy, we call for:

1. (a) The appointment of a non-party and independent personality - acceptable to all the three alliances waging struggle against dictatorship and communalism - as the Vice-President and the transfer of power by the President to this Vice-President after dissolving the present government and parliament and Ershad himself vacating the office of the President;

(b) Establishment of an interim caretaker government (headed by the aforementioned Acting President) whose main task would be to arrange free and fair elections to a sovereign National Assembly within three months.

2. (a) The head of the caretaker government shall be non-party and independent, that is, he shall not be, either directly or indirectly, the follower or associate of any political party; which means that he shall not participate in any election for the posts of the President, Vice-President or Member of Parliament;

(b) This interim government shall reconstitute the Election Commission and recast the activities and responsibilities of the Election Commission with a view to organise free and fair elections alongside carrying out only the daily routine functions of the administration;

(c) The confidence of the voters to freely exercise their franchise according to their desire and conscience and without any influence whatsoever must be restored and this exercise must be ensured;

(d) The entire national media including government-owned radio and TV must be turned into an independent and autonomous institution in order to keep the mass media completely free and unfettered opportunity must be guaranteed for all the contending political parties participating in the election to enable them to propagate their views.

3. The interim caretaker government shall transfer power to the sovereign parliament elected through free and fair elections and the government shall be answerable to this parliament.
4. (a) In recognition of the people's sovereignty the rule by Constitution shall be made absolute and unfettered and efforts to seize power through any unconstitutional means shall be resisted. By no unconstitutional or extra-constitutional means or pretext outside the preview of elections shall an elected government be dislodged from power;

(b) Preservation of the people's basic rights, independence and impartiality of the judiciary, and rule of law shall be guaranteed;

(c) All laws to the detriment of the fundamental rights shall be abrogated.