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POL BANGLADESH - WS



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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMCONSUL DACCA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5377  
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD NIACT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI NIACT IMMEDIATE

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~~SECRET~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 DACCA 0689

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C O R R E C T E D C I O P I Y ( P A R A O N E )

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH DESIRE FOR STATEMENT OF  
US GOVERNMENT INTENTIONS

1. SUMMARY. GOBD FONMINISTER SAMAD AT BEHEST OF PRIMIN MUJIB RAHMAN WOULD LIKE TO HAVE BEFORE LATTER PROCEEDS TO MOSCOW, CLEAR STATEMENT OF U.S. INTENTIONS VIS-A-VIS BD. GOBD ALSO SEEKS US ASSISTANCE VIS-A-VIS GOP IN OBTAINING PERMISSION FOR UN, ICRC OR OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION TO VISIT AND ASCERTAIN SITUATION OF BENGALEES IN PAKISTAN. GOBD WISHES TO REPATRIATE ALL OF THESE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE FROM DEPT ON RESPONSE TO BE GIVEN TO SAMAD ON SUBJECTS RAISED BY HIM PRIOR TO SAMAD'S DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW, TUESDAY AFTERNOON, IN PARTY OF PRIMIN MUJIB.

2. BY COINCIDENCE AT SAME TIME I WAS SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH GOBD FONMIN ABDUS SAMAD TO CARRY OUT INSTRUCTIONS IN STATE 32170, HIS OFFICE WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIM REQUEST ME TO CALL ON HIM TODAY. I MET SAMAD AT HIS OFFICE THIS MORNING FOR DISCUSSION LASTING OVER ONE HOUR.

3. SAMAD OPENED CONVERSATION BY RECALLING MY TALK WITH HIM ON JANUARY 11 (DACCA 10, 11, 12) AT WHICH TIME HE HAD MADE CERTAIN POINTS AND REQUESTED CERTAIN INDICATIONS OF US ATTITUDES. HE SAID THAT

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By HRm/VSW Date 11/14/97

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IT HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTMENT TO HIM AND TO GOBD THAT NO RESPONSES HAD BEEN FORTHCOMING; THIS HAD RAISED SERIOUS QUESTION IN MINDS OF BENGALEE PEOPLE AND OF SOME MEMBERS OF CABINET (WHOM SAMAD CHARACTERIZED AS "LEFTISTS") AS TO WHETHER US CONSULAR MISSION SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION HERE. QUESTION HAD ALSO BEEN RAISED, WHETHER, IN VIEW OF CLEAR INDICATIONS OF CONTINUING USG FRIENDSHIP WITH PAKISTAN, PURPOSE OF CONSULAR MISSION IN DACCA WAS NOT ACTUALLY TO SERVE INTERESTS OF PAKISTAN UNDER DIRECTION FROM U.S. EMBASSY ISLAMABAD RATHER CONSTITUTE INSTRUMENT FOR FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOBD. SAMAD SAID THAT HE HAD COUNSELED PATIENCE AND HAD EXPRESSED VIEW THAT FAVORABLE DECISION IN REGARD US-BD RELATIONS WOULD EMERGE AFTER PRESIDENT NIXON'S VISIT TO CHINA; THAT VISIT WAS NOW ALMOST OVER AND GOBD FELT THAT TIME WAS RIPE TO ASCERTAIN BASIC USG INTENTIONS IN REGARD TO BD AND, IN LIGHT OF THOSE INTENTIONS TO JUDGE ADVISABILITY OF ALLOWING US MISSION TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION.

4. SAMAD STRESSED THAT ACTUAL DATE OF RECOGNITION WAS NOT AS IMPORTANT RELATIVELY AS INDICATIONS OF ATTITUDE; IN CASE OF SEVERAL OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING FRANCE, U.K. ETC. EVEN PRIOR TO FORMAL RECOGNITION, LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES HAD MADE CONTACT WITH GOBD HAD EXCHANGED VIEWS, AND HAD ESTABLISHED RELATIONSHIPS WHICH

MADE GOBD WILLING GIVE THOSE GOVTS WHATEVER TIME WAS REQUIRED TO ANNOUNCE RECOGNITION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR OWN PROCESSES. THIS HAD NOT BEEN THE CASE WITH USG; AFTER SINGLE OFFICIAL CONTACT INITIATED

BY SAMAD HIMSELF, THERE HAD BEEN NO EXCHANGES OF VIEW BETWEEN USG REPS AND BD OFFICIALS, AND SERIOUS QUESTION HAD BEEN RAISED IN MINDS OF BENGALEES AS TO PRECISELY WHAT US MISSION WAS DOING IN DACCA.

LETTERS HAD BEEN WRITTEN TO NEWSPAPERS RAISING THIS QUESTION PARTICULARLY SINCE US OFFICIALS WERE CLEARLY SEEN DRIVING ABOUT THE STREETS, AND US FLAG WAS FLYING FROM BOTH OFFICE BUILDING AND CONSULS GENERAL'S RESIDENCE. WHILE BD REPS IN US WERE DENIED SUCH DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES AS TAX EXEMPTION AND DIPLOMATIC LICENSING OF THEIR AUTOMOBILES AND WERE REQUIRED REPORT TO DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AS "FOREIGN AGENTS" GOBD HAD BEEN LENIENT AND HAD TREATED US MISSION AND ITS MEMBERS WITH FULL RANGE OF DIPLOMATIC COURTESY.

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5. IN VIEW OF HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO MOSCOW, PRIMIN MUJIB HAD FELT NEED TO KNOW JUST WHAT USG INTENDED, IF INDEED, USG WERE ILL-DEPOSED TO BD AND INTENDED TO PERSIST IN SUBORDINATION BD INTERESTS IN US-PAK FRIENDSHIP, THIS WAS SOMETHING PRIMIN NEEDED TO KNOW. IF, ON OTHER HAND AS APPEARED TO BE CASE FROM STATEMENTS OF PROMINENT US CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS AND FROM SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY US PRESS AND PUBLIC, THERE WAS GENUINE DESIRE FOR FRIENDSHIP WITH BD, WHICH WOULD MOVE USG IN DIRECTION OF SYMPATHETIC RELATIONSHIP AS BEFITTED ONE DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY VIS-A-VIS ANOTHER, THIS ALSO WAS SOMETHING PRIMIN NEEDED TO KNOW. IN UNDERTAKING DISCUSSION WITH MAJOR WORLD POWER LIKE USSR, PRIMIN WAS ACUTELY CONSCIOUS THAT HE WOULD BE SETTING PATTERN FOR RELATIONSHIPS WHICH MIGHT PERSIST FOR CONSIDERABLE TIME IN FUTURE, AND HE DID NOT WISH TO DO THIS IN INGORANCE OR MISAPPREHENSION OF ATTITUDE OF ANOTHER MAJOR WORLD POWER.

6. IN SHORT, SAMAD SAID, PRECISE DATE OF FORMAL RECOGNITION WAS NOT AS IMPORTANT AT PRESENT MOMENT AS CLEAR INDICATION OF KIND OF RELATIONSHIP USG WANTED TO HAVE WITH BD, CLEAR STATEMENT OF PURPOSES AND GUIDELINES OF US MISSION IN DACCA, AND KIND OF TREATMENT WHICH WOULD BE ACCORDED BD MISSION IN UNITED STATES.

7. TURNING TO SEPARATE POINT, SAMAD SAID THAT GOBD WAS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED OVER HARSH TREATMENT BEING ACCORDED BENGALLEES IN PAKISTAN; REPORTS WERE REACHING GOBD DAILY OF FORCED SEPARATION OF FAMILIES, CONFINEMENT IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS, DENIAL OF FOOD, WATER, AND ELECTRICITY TO BENGALLEES' RESIDENTIAL AREAS, AND ACTUAL PHYSICAL MAL-TREATMENT. HE SAID THAT GOBD STRONGLY DESIRED TO REPATRIATE ALL OF THESE PERSONS

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; IN MEANTIME IT WAS IMPERATIVE THAT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION LIKE UN AND RED CROSS BE ALLOWED VISIT CAMPS AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS INHABITED BY BENGALLEES AND INSURE THAT THEY WERE BEING ACCORDED HUMANE TREATMENT. SAMAD POINTED OUT THAT GOBD HAD ALLOWED REPS OF UN AND ICRS TO VISIT BIHARI AREAS IN BD. AND HE URGENTLY REQUESTED THAT USG USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH GOP TO PERSUADE LATTER TO ACCORD EQUAL FACILITIES TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CASE OF BENGALLEES.

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MUJIB THROUGHLY AWARE) NOT YET FULFILLED) I NEVERTHELESS URGE THAT MAXIMUM EFFORTS BE MADE PROVIDE MUJIB WITH KINDS OF ASSURANCE HE SEEKS BEFORE HE DEPARTS FOR MOSCOW. IN MY VIEW THESE WOULD COMPRISE AS MINIMUM (A) CLEAR STATEMENT OF US INTENTIONS: EXTEND FORMAL RECOGNITION TO BD IN NEAR FUTURE AND THEREAFTER ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AT EMBASSY LEVEL. (B) ASSURANCE THAT INTERESTS OF BD WILL NOT BE SUBORDINATED IN US WORLD OUTLOOK TO THOSE OF ANY OTHER SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRY. PARTICULARLY PAKISTAN, (C) INDICATION OF US DESIRE TO ASSIST BD TO MAXIMUM EXTENT IN MEETING ITS NEEDS FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS; (D) GENERALIZED INVITATION TO BOTH MUJIB AND SAMAD TO VISIT US AT SOME UNSPECIFIED CONVENIENT FUTURE TIME; (E) EXPRESSION OF WILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE BROAD RANGE OF VIEWS ON WORLD PROBLEMS WITH BD OFFICIALS AT BOTH TECHNICAL AND POLITICAL LEVELS.

11. REQUEST DEPT'S INSTRUCTIONS IN TIME FOR ME TO CONVEY SENSE OF USG THINKING TO SAMAD BEFORE NOON DACCA TIME TUESDAY. SAMAD HAS SOLEMNLY ASSURED ME THAT WHATEVER I SAY TO HIM WILL BE AS CLOSELY HELD AS I ASK THAT IT BE.

12. REPORT OF BRIEF DISCUSSION OF UN RELIEF MATTERS FOLLOWS

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