

Bangladesh: Corona Pandemic and Getting Free the Opposition Leader



Comments 0



Swadesh Roy 26 March 2020 6358 views

Like many other countries in the world, Bangladesh is now locked down for Covid-19 virus affect. All the citizens of Bangladesh are now worried about this pandemic situation and their health and daily life. In this situation, no countries of the world get any attention to political news. But sometime in many catastrophic moments, some political events held. On 24th March, Tuesday evening, a political event also happened in Bangladesh. Media also broadcast, published and upload it prominently despite getting the expected attention. Following the social media in Bangladesh like Facebook, Twitter, and Linked In, it may be said that only core political activists are discussing this news.

The news came out in the afternoon on 24 March by a press conference of the Law Minister of Bangladesh Government, Mr. AnisulHaque M.P. He arranged the press conference in his residence at Banani, one of the posh areas in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. In this press conference, Mr. Haque informed that by the instruction of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, his Law Ministry has decided to suspend the sentence -the sentence of jail for one of the opposition leaders Begum Khaleda Zia - for six months. Law Minister didn't admit that they have decided it for this Corona pandemic situation; it was done only on the humanitarian ground. According to the penal code of Bangladesh, they can suspend any convicted who are awarded jail sentence. While talking with the Law Minister, it came to know that his ministry has done it according to the 401/1 section of the penal code of Bangladesh. In this section of penal code, the executive division of Bangladesh has rights of suspending or reducing any kind of jail sentence of the convict. When it was asked to the Law Minister about the exercise of this type of executive power, whether it is a healthy practice for the rule of law of the country and is it hampering the sovereignty of the judiciary, Law Minister replied 'Not at all', because the section of penal code has been being used in our country for hundred years, and it is a soft power for the executive division to maintain many of the humanitarian ground for the prisoners. But all the suspension and decrease of the sentence of jail are conditional and so is the suspension of six months sentence of Begum Khaleda Zia. The day when she will be freed from then to six months, she has to stay at her own home. She can take all the medical treatment staying at her home but not in any hospital or going abroad.'

Khaleda Zia is not only one of the opposition party's leaders but also a former Prime Minister of Bangladesh, and with an upside down paradox, she is the only head of the government of Bangladesh who was awarded sentence of jail for corruption. It is known that corruption is one of the major problems in Bangladesh which was started after taking control of the power by the military junta through the *quo d'état* in 1975. From 1975 to 2020, is a long way. In the meantime, two military and five civilian governments have run the country. Despite, corruption is still part of the government and society of Bangladesh. The present government is running the country for consecutive three terms and they are trying to reduce corruption and establish the rule of law in every sector. The trial of Khaleda Zia was the Part of those activities. Though, none of the executives of the government can say that they have decreased the corruption to zero level by the trial and the sentence of the jail of Khaleda Zia. By the way, the trial of the former Prime Minister is indeed a big symbol against corruption. It could be used for reducing corruption in Bangladesh but what is the reality will be calculated in the future. However, it is true at the five years regime of Khaleda Zia, according to the Transparency International Survey, Bangladesh was awarded Champion in corruption for five years in a row.

However, when Khaleda Zia's sentence was suspended then corruption, politics, and the technic of the politics or anything except Coronavirus are not getting any attention to the people. The whole country is locked down, and moreover, the medical system and its infrastructure are not that much well in Bangladesh. On the other hand, Bangladesh is the highly-dense populated area in the world. Besides, in the last three months, thousands-hundreds of workers have returned their home from the Corona affected countries like Italy, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran and others. Those were not handled properly. Most of them didn't maintain the home quarantine. Rather, they mix up themselves with the community. Instead of that, four or five days ago, thousands of people gathered together for their prayers to God because their firm belief is that anything happens in the world, God can save them. The government couldn't motivate them properly, like any type of gathering is harmful in this Corona pandemic time.

So, the suspension of the sentence of Khaleda Zia is not any big issue for Bangladesh now. In Bangladesh, now the issue is only that how the government can tackle this Corona pandemic situation with their all types of limitations. Even, the conscious people of Bangladesh are worried about the aftermath regarding their economy, later Corona pandemic.

Swadesh Roy

The author is a senior journalist of Bangladesh. A highest state award winning journalist Roy can be reached at swadeshroy@gmail.com

BY SWADESH ROY

Budapest and mother of Gavor's Girlfriend

ON THIS DAY

Justice Ajay Lamba sworn in as Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court

Players feted

Musician Kishor Giri passes away

United Bank of India officials march against bad loans at Daboka

Deplorable power supply situation in Silchar

RELATED

Restoring Forest Food Sources to Address Goalpara's Human-Elephant Conflict

Zubeen Garg: Assam, Society and the Rhythm of a Universal Vision

Lost Winters and Tropical Nights

Surviving patriarchy beyond care

Lakes: The lifeblood of our planet
