

## **Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance**



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**ABSTRACT:** Bangladesh is performing better in the growth of GDP and experiencing remarkable progress in development indicators such as poverty alleviation, maternal mortality, infant mortality and enrollment in primary education. However, despite the restoration parliamentary democracy in 1990s, political governance is decaying in the country. The present study, taking dynamics of Bangladeshi politics into consideration, seeks to explore the interplay between business and politics and its impact on governance with supplementary evidence from public transportation sector as case example. Among others, the principal question of the paper is how business interest creates crisis in governance? It reveals that business elites are involved in all decision-making process in the government institutions and they make pro-business policy undermining people's interest that leads to a confrontation between government institution and business elites which ultimately generates crisis in governance in almost all other section of the nation like transportation sector.

**KEYWORDS:** Bangladesh Politics, Abuse of Power, Business, Conflict, Governance

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Presently, a euphoria is haunting Bangladesh – the euphoria of development and growth. The country is enjoying a continual and sustained growth in GDP from 5.045% in 2009 to 7.284% in 2017 and expected to reach 8.0% in 2019. Progress was underpinned by 6.5 percent growth on average over the decade and reaching to 7.9 percent in 2017/2018, according to official estimates. Rapid growth enabled Bangladesh to reach the lower middle-income country status in 2015 (World Bank, 2019). Bangladesh is 1 of only 18 developing countries with an annual growth rate that has never fallen below 2 per cent. Not only outstanding economic growth, Bangladesh has also made remarkable progress in other social development indicators in the last two decades. It has reduced poverty from 44.2 percent in 1991 to 14.8 percent in 2016/17, maternal mortality from 574/100000 in 1990 to 170/100000 in 2014, infant mortality from 100/1000 in 1990 to 38/1000 in 2012, and in increasing equitable access – girls: 99.4 per cent and boys: 97.2 per cent – in education (Riaz, 2016). What is, however, heartbreaking for its ill-fated citizen is poor or mal governance in almost all of the public sectors. It has witnessed a continuous regress in governance since her birth in 1971. All the apparatuses of the state look like modern institution – as in developed country – in paper but prove to be ineffective in reality.

Although, parliamentary democracy was restored in 1991, however, the country's political governance hardly witnessed any promising change. Political governance is about managing the state and establishing a practice of accountability to the people, which includes the process of electing leaders to office, the interface between the political and bureaucratic arms of government, the strength of oversight bodies, and the role of civil society in influencing the quality of governance (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). In Bangladesh, political governance is engrossed with innumerable problems of which confrontational politics occupies the central concern as a major threat to democracy itself (Osman, 2010). It causes unhealthy competition between the parties and monopolization of state institutions and resources by the ruling party which end up with unaccountable governance. Restoration of parliamentary democracy marked the emergence of an adversely competitive political system and confrontation where the parties are merely committed to democratic practices. The party that wins the election monopolizes the state apparatus with 'winner takes all' attitude, leaving little scope for the losing party to take part in the process of governance, which leads them to be violent, destructive and irresponsible. In the monopolization process, the ruling party exerts a strong control over all the key state institutions which leads to poor or weak governance.

This mal-governance is embedded into dynamics of the Bangladeshi politics. There is a usual idea among the common people of the country that politics itself is a problem in Bangladesh. But very few are aware of the genuine problem of politics. Dynamics of politics in Bangladesh are intrusion of business in politics, factionalism, unaccountability, corruption and abuse of power,

## **Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance**

criminalization of politics and hereditary politics. Of them increase of business influence in politics is most dominant. It is evident that the number of MPs in Bangladesh who describe themselves as businessmen is high. It has increased sharply when compared to the earliest elected parliaments of independent Bangladesh. The categories that previously dominated among MPs were lawyers and professionals (mainly teachers) (Ruud & Islam, 2016).

What happens when politics is being commercialized? What does it result in when the space for politicians are being narrowing down because of intrusion of businessman? Why it is that more and more business professionals are invading political life of Bangladesh? Is it problematic that businessmen are joining politics in growing number? – Why? How does the business interest generate crises for governance in Bangladesh? The study investigates the answer of these critical queries in the context of Bangladesh. The paper depicts the nature of confrontational politics in Bangladesh, its causes and impacts on governance with supportive evidence from secondary sources such as relevant books, journal articles, newspaper and internet. As case example, it shows how business interest can paralyze governance in public transport sector of Bangladesh. It first explores the dynamics of Bangladeshi politics and growing business interest in politics followed by a discussion discovering the impacts of business on governance.

### **2. DYNAMICS OF THE BANGLADESHI POLITICS**

The vehicle of Bangladesh politics is routing an unknown avenue. It started its journey in typical and customary course of direction since independence in 1971 and continued its usual voyage up to August 15, 1975. Bangladesh politics gained an experience of cruel bloodshed in the abovementioned date. Since then wheel of the country's politics travelled a long trajectory of military rule and it reached a plateau in 1991 after a prolonged – nearly a decade – violent mass upsurge. Parliamentary politics has been introduced through the twelfth amendment of the constitution. It ushered a hope of new horizon in the country's political life. It was anticipated that mass movement would show a fresh start in national politics. Unfortunately, it was an illusion. Politics of Bangladesh took an uneven and bellicose path again. Here is the question that why is politics in Bangladesh not following anticipated path? Why it is that confrontation marked the politics? Why political governance is falling down while economy, particularly GDP, is performing well? Answer of these questions can be found exploring the dynamics of the Bangladesh politics. The dynamics of Bangladesh politics are hereditary politics, unaccountability and abuse of power, farcical election and accession to power, corruption and culture of impunity.

#### **2.1. Hereditary Politics and Culture of Nepotism in Party System**

Bangladesh demonstrates all the characteristics of poor political culture. Recruitment in top posts such as party's president or chairperson, in major political parties are largely based on hereditary leadership. However, some leftist political parties and Bangladesh Jama'at-E-Islami among rightist parties follow democratic system for leader selection. Other Islamic rightist parties hardly practice electoral process in the selection of party chief, these parties fully follow the dynastic route of headship. Apart from the principal position of the party, Influential posts such as national position, district or Upazial leader, are filled up by descendants of the predecessors. It is very difficult for an ordinary leader or activist – particularly for those who do not have political background or financial backup– to get higher position in a party or in government. Therefore, leaders in the central, regional and in local committee of all political parties have political family background. They are mostly relatives of former politicians.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is established on September 01, 1978 headed by Ziaur Rahman and he led the party until his assassination in 1981. After his death former president of Bangladesh Justices Abdus Sattar took the charge of chairman of the party and remained in the post until Khaleda Zia took over him in 1984. Since then over three decades Khaled Zia has been leading the party till date (Table-1). It is widely perceived that her elder son Tarique Rahman is the de facto chairperson of the party and he has been influencing the decisions of both government (2001-2006) and party. Presently he is acting chairman of the party as Khaleda zia is in prison. Tarique's leadership goes under criticism due to his alleged involvement in corruption during BNP government (2001-2006). His wife, Zubaida Rahman, therefore, is perceived future leader if, somehow, Tarique's leadership faces challenge. Form its inception, the party's control remains in the hands of Zia's heir that straightforwardly demonstrates dynastic feature in the party.

Bangladesh Awami League, popularly known as Awami League (AL), is under Sheikh Hasina's leadership nearly four decades (1981-present). Although changes have been happened in the position of General Secretary and other top position over the period, dynastic characteristics are bluntly present in the party's culture. Councils for new leadership are held every three years, however, the president's position remained unchanged. It can be clearly perceived that Sheikh Hasina is the leader of the party until her death. Who will be the next captain of the boat? Answer to this question is clear: either Sheikh Rehana or Sajeed Wazed Joy, IT adviser to the Prime Minister (2014-present), the former is the sister and the latter is the only son of Prime Minister Shekih Hasina. If they are not placed then third option is Saima Wazed Putul, only daughter of Sheikh Hasina. Party-men are psychologically ready to find the shadow of next leadership in Joy and Rehana after Sheikh Hasina and accept them as their commander (Dhaka Tribune, 2016). Although they (Rehan and Joy) are not top brass in the party, however, their influence in government and party is apparent (Daily

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

Star, 2016). Therefore, it is appeared that culture of dynastic leadership is inevitable in Awami League. It would not be exaggeration to say that Awami League is comparatively more wrecked by the culture of inheritance and nepotism (Table-1).

Hereditary practice is also noticeably established in Jatiya Party, founded by Hussain Muhammad Ershad in 1986. Ershad remained chairman of the party until his death in 2019. He was not only chairman but he was all in all in the party. GM Quader, current chairman and Ershad's younger brother, takes the control of the party after his death and Rowsahn Ershad, first wife of Ershad, becomes co-chairman (Table-1). Their control on party is unquestionably accepted by the party-men which speaks loudly about nepotism in party's top leadership.

Those who are elected in the parliament as PM are mostly relatives of either former or incumbent politician. Since independence there are eleven parliaments in Bangladesh, all of them highly experienced with heir and successor of former politician. For example, out of 3 parliamentary constituencies of Bagerhat district 2 constituencies have been occupied by Sheikh Helal Uddin, son of Sheikh Abu Naser and nephew of Sheikh Mjuibur Raman and his son Sheikh Tonmoy. If someone wants to be a Member of Parliament, chairman in Union Parishad or in Upazila Parishad usually s/he should have political background. It is often appeared that relative such as wife or husband, son or daughter, in-laws of a former Member or Chairman are usual candidate in electoral or leadership race (Table-1).

**Table-1: Dynastic Characters and Nepotism in Politics - 2019**

Name of the Individual	Party	Relationship	Position in Party/Politics
Sheikh Hasina	Awami League	Sheikh Mujibur Rahman	PM and President of Awami League
Saima Wazed Putul	Awami League	Daughter of Sheikh Hasina	-
Eng. Khondokar Mosarof Hossen	Awami League	Father in law of Saima Wazed Putul	Ex. Minister and Presidium Member
Khondakar Mohtashim Hossen	Awami League	Brother of Khondokar Mosarof Hossen	Chairman of Faridpur Sadar Upazila
Mahbub Ara Gini	Awami League	Grand Son of M.A. Wazed Miah*	Ex Whip and MP
Ivy Rahman	Awami League	Distant Mother in law (Khala Shashuri) of Sheik Rehan**	Women's Affairs secretary
Najmul Hasan Papon	Awami League	Son of Ivy Rahman and Zillur Rahman	MP
Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim	Awami League	Cousin (Fufato vai) of Sheik Hasina	MP and Presidium Member
Sheik Fazle Noor Taposh	Awami League	Son of Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni***	MP
Sheikh Helal	Awami League	Cousin (Chachato vai) of Sheikh Hasina	MP
Abdur Rab Serniabat	Awami League	Brother in Law of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman	Ex MP and Minister
Abul Hasnat Abdullah	Awami League	Son of Serniabat and Cousin (Fufato vai) of Sheikh Hasina	Ex whip and MP
	Awami League		Central Committee Member
Mahbub Alam Hanif	Awami League	Brother in Law (Choto Boner Debora) of Abul Hasnat Abdullah & Beyai of Hasina	MP and Joint Secretary
Jahangir Kabir Nanok	Awami League	Cousin of Abul Hasnat Abdullah	Ex MP and Joint Secretary
Elias Ahmed Chowdhuri (late)	Awami League	Cousin (Fufato vai) of Sheikh Hasina	Ex MP
Noor-E-Alam Chowdhuri (Liton Chowdhuri)	Awami League	Son of Elias Ahmed Chowdhuri and Nephew of Hasina	Ex Whip and MP
Mojibur Rahman Chowdhuri (Nixon Chowdhuri)	Awami League	Son of Elias Ahmed Chowdhuri and Nephew of Hasina	MP
Baha Uddin Nasim	Awami League	Cousin (Fufato vai) of Sheikh Hasina	MP
Amir Hossain Amu	Awami League	Uncle of Sheikh Hasina (Fufa)	MP and Advisor
Sjeeb Wazed Joy	Awami League	Son of Sheikh Hasina	Member & ICT advisor to the PM

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

Tarique Rahman	BNP	Son of Ex. President Ziaur Rahman and Ex. PM Khleda Zia	Acting chairman of BNP
Begum Khurshida Jahan Haq	BNP	Sister of Khleda Zia	Ex. MP and Minister
Eng. Sharin Islam Tuhin	BNP	Nephew of Khleda Zia	Ex. MP and Gaibanda District President
Mejor Sayeed Eskander	BNP	Brother of Khleda Zia	Ex. MP and Central Leader
G M Qader	Jatiya Party	Brother of Ex. President Hussain M. Ershad	Co-chairman, MP and Ex. Minister
Rowshan Ershad	Jatiya Party	Wife of Hussain M. Ershad	MP and Senior Co-Chariman
Mokbul Shahria Asif	Jatiya Party	Nephew of Ershad	MP and Leader
Merina Rahman		Sister of Ershad	Ex. MP
	Jatiya Party		
Momta Wahab	Jatiya Party	Sister of Rowshan Ershad and Sister-in-law of Ershad	Ex. Minister

**Source:** Daily Manab Zamin, Poriborton.com

<<https://www.poriborton.com/poriborton-special/46193>>

<<http://www.mzamin.com/details.php?mzamin=NzU3Nzc=>>>

\*Husband of Sheikh Hasina

\*\* Sister of Sheikh Hasina

\*\*\* Nephew (son of his sister) of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Ex. Jubo League Leader.

Other than family background wealthy economic condition such as medium or big business or huge land property and higher positions in civil-military offices – senior bureaucrats, army generals, and higher police officials – are also persuasive dynamics in getting expected post in any party. Due to the money game in elections, either in general or local, nearly unknown or least known candidate can even get nomination through pouring huge money to the concerned party fund (Siraj, K. 2016). As the commercialization of politics is significantly growing, the nomination ticket is sold in high price. The nexus between nomination trading and commercialization of politics is, therefore, proportional.

In Bangladesh, generally, most of the political officials belong to the higher income group, compared to the majority of the electorate. Thus, they consider themselves unaccountable to the people and do not attempt to involve mass people effectively in developmental efforts. Instead, elective positions are used to maintain liaison with civil servants and political agents of the chief executive of the government in order to obtain economic benefit and gain social prestige. Obviously, these elected officers have some opportunities to allocate resources within their respective jurisdictions. This is resorted to satisfy influential patrons, near relatives and other members of one's own family; the benefit barely reaches the multitude of the poor who elect them to office (Khan, 1987)

### 2.3. Farcical election and accession to power

Till now, election is the most accepted universal way to get to the political office. Through competitive election people choose their political leader for a public office to rule over them. In Bangladesh, elections are marred by vote rigging, controversy, conflict and high scale of violence with death and injuries (Mollah & Jahan, 2018). Muscle power is used as major mechanism to win in the race. Those who are strong in muscle power and black money they are usually get elected. Vote rigging, attack on political oppositions in polling center and manipulation of election result by ruling party is normal scenario (Mollah & Jahan). Since independence all the governments are accused of manipulation of election. Except three parliamentary elections, 5th, seventh and eighth, free and fair election is rarely evident in the country. Accordingly, election cannot be a fair process of choosing leader in public offices. Recent elections are distressingly manipulated and disputed as the incumbent government abolished the neutral caretaker government system through fifteenth amendment of the constitution in 2011.

Bangladesh have gained the experience of holding eleven general elections from 1973 to 2018. Of them 4 – fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth parliamentary elections – were comparatively free, fair, credible and accepted by national and foreign observers and political parties as those were held under Neutral Caretaker Government (NCG). Rest of the elections are highly controversial, manipulated and rigged by ruling party and marred by wider range of deadly violence leaving many dead and injured. Tenth and eleventh parliamentary elections more disputed and manipulated by the ruling party (Chowdhury, 2018). 2014 election – tenth parliament – was totally a farcical election as it was boycotted by 18 opposition parties led by major opposition party BNP in protest against the abolishment of the caretaker government provision. It was a 'failed' election. A total of 153 seats were uncontested, mostly going to the government led Awami League. "Voter turnout was low, due to both the boycott and violence". At least 21 people were killed, over 100 polling centers were set on fire, and the Electoral Commission suspended voting at over 300 polling stations due to the conflict (Prothom alo, 2015).

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

Eleventh general election was also extremely confronting and disputed, the electoral process was unprecedentedly questionable. The role of the election commission has come under serious criticism and assumed to be disgracefully partisan. The entire journey of the commission – from the declaration of election schedule to publishing result officially – become dubious and came under questions. In an editorial CNN termed the election as “A disputed election and a dangerous new era for Bangladesh's politics” (Kugelman, 2019). Time magazine called it 'They Threaten Everyone.' Sheikh Hasina's Landslide Win in Bangladesh Marred by Voter Suppression’ (Holzl, V. & Hossain, A. 2018). Independent headlined as “Bangladesh election marred by ‘vote-rigging’, deadly violence and fears of media crackdown” (Dalton, J. 2018.).

Before poll campaign, ruling party’s candidates have got favor from government officials – police, administrative officer, election commission officials – while opposition faced fierce restriction on their campaign (Prothom alo, January 9 2019, BBC Bangla, November 25, 2018 & Hossen, M. January 17, 2019). Attacks on candidates and their supporters, arrest of oppositions and pulling out posters and banners and intimidation were the common strategies of ruling party activists. Transparency International Bangladesh (TiB) in its after poll methodological survey commented on election as "partially participatory, non-competitive, questionable and faulty". It also demanded judicial inquiry into the reported irregularities during the election. The report found serious electoral irregularities in 47 out of selected 50 seats (see table: 1). Electoral irregularities like stamping ballot papers the night before polls and ballot stuffing by capturing booths on the election-day took place on the 11th parliamentary polls. Other irregularities include silence of law enforcers and administrative officials, casting fake votes, barring voters from going to polling stations, forcing voters to cast vote for a specific symbol in public and barring polling agents from going to centers (Daily Star, 2019). The Election Day deadly clashes leaves 17 people dead and many injured including candidate openly under physically attack (Khalid, S. 2018).

**Table-2: Major irregularities in eleventh parliamentary election, 2018.**

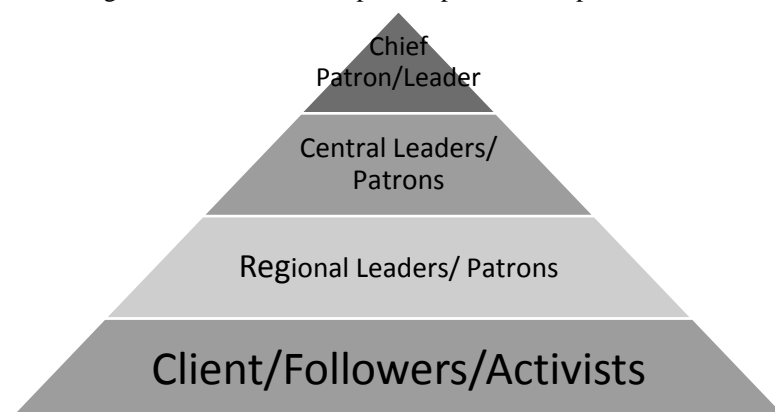
Irregularities (in one or more centers)	Seats
Silent role of administration and law enforcement agencies	42
Fake vote casting	41
Ballot stamping at night before polls	33
Stamping ballot openly occupying booth	30
Non availability of ballot papers	22
Ballot box filled up prior to starting polls	20

**Source:** TiB, 2019

The above-mentioned evidences demonstrate the real picture of general elections held in Bangladesh over the decades (Table-2). Although, through election, smooth power transition is anticipated but reality is not only different but also bizarre in the country. When accession to power is not transparent and credible it is thoroughly unlikely that a public official to be honest and accountable to people. If the political official cannot be brought under answerability and transparency it is quite impossible to check corruption and abuse of power. It is simply stupidity to hope that a public official, who is elected using muscle power through a flawed and rigged election, would be honest and committed to people’s interest. As such political leaders are morally wrecked, they logically lost ethical control over civil administrators. Thus, when public servants commit crimes or engage in corruption such inflicted political leaders who are morally weak cannot stop their corruption rather a profane nexus is grown between the two.

### 2.4. Patron-Client Relations

Foundation of Bangladesh politics is mainly laid on patron-client cycle (Islam, 2013). The key to this political system is personal gain in particular and group interest in general. The relationship is reciprocal: both patron and client are dependent on each other.



**Figure-1:** Patron Client Pyramid

## **Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance**

It is a pyramidal system where chief of the party lies in the top of this pyramid. Party leaders such as central, regional and local leaders, act as patron while followers or activists are clients. The chief of a party is the principal patron and there are several central patrons act under the party chief. Regional leaders of a party act as regional client of the central leader and at the same time as patron of the local and regional followers. Followers or clients provide support for local leaders or patron while local patron for regional and central leaders. Patron's politics sustains on the clients supports and without client's backing no patron can survive in the adversative field of the politics (Majumdar, 2008). This relationship grows on the basis of narrow mutual group interest for which patron and client are ready to do anything, be it legal or illegal. They even can commit criminal offence such as murder or violence. Client do anything right or wrong for patron because client's interest is also involved with the fate of patron. They mutually protect them, secure their support for each other. During an election clients or activists of a party play major role in achieving electoral victory. After the election if patron is elected, for example, as MP, Mayor, Upazila or UP Chairman s/he provides financial or other benefits to clients as the rewards of pre-election activities.

Client receives due and undue privileges such as lease of Bazar, terminal, tender for public works, license for business and construction of public infrastructure for example road, bridge, building etc. Moreover, using protection and influence of patron a client can embezzle public property, grab land and even relief goods for destitute people (Daily Star, 2020). When an influential client commits any serious crime such as murder, rape or fraudulence, patron provides shelter and security and fight for client to bring him out of punishment. Even though, a client somehow goes under trial, his/her patron, using political influence, eventually manages the police and court to bring his/her client out of punishment which breeds culture of impunity. Thus, criminal patron being able to bypass punishment becomes more dangerous criminal. Over the years lots of criminal clients of influential patron have bypassed punishment and got Presidential Clemency just for political consideration (Ahsan, 2011).

### **2.5. Culture of unaccountability and rule of law (Khan, 2003)**

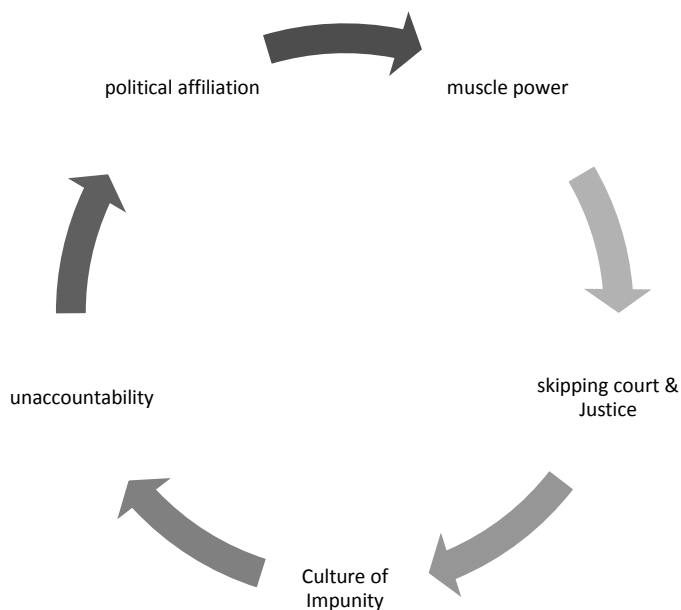
Lack of accountability and transparency in the administrative and political activities seriously undermines the effectiveness of the governance in Bangladesh. Secrecy is another factor in government offices which also awfully affects governance effectiveness. Although recently Right to Information Act-2009 has been introduced in order to ensure the openness in the governmental activities, peoples representative and government employees are not psychologically ready to make things open before people due to their narrow unholy individual interest. This culture of secrecy is one of the unscrupulous legacies of barbaric British misrule (1757-1947). Since independence in 1971 'Political Arbitrariness' in decision making has gradually grown and imbedded with this culture of unaccountability. The chief executive of Bangladesh Government, be it the president or the prime minister, has been practicing unchecked and unbridled power because s/he is simultaneously head of the ruling party and head of the government (Choudhury, 1995). Being head of both of the government and the party prime minister becomes all powerful and the premier becomes arbitrary in decision making. It is said that the prime minister of Bangladesh is one of the most powerful rulers in the world. Keeping the rules of business aside the head of government in Bangladesh can make any decision by his/her own choice.

Bangladesh adopted parliamentary system in 1991 through the twelfth constitutional amendment from presidential form of government. It was anticipated that with the introduction to parliamentary system the democratic values will be practiced in the government offices and people will get the essence of the change. With the passage of time, it is now proved that it was just an amendment in the constitution nothing else because it could not have produced any meaningful change in the way people are governed. The change resulting in the concentration of enormous power in the hands of the prime minister in particular and the executive branch in general which has terrible negative implications for accountability and transparency (Khan, 2003).

Unaccountability is a commonplace in the country. It is very tough to take anyone under answerability whether he is businessman, bureaucrat or politician. It is fashionable and trendy to be out of control and accountability; criminal takes pride being escaped from judicial procedure; it means s/he is so powerful that s/he can avoid and bypass court. If any criminal people representative or public official is brought under accountability or answerability s/he thinks it undermines his/her image, it is shameful to his power and influence. Accountability is a rare practice in the country's offices. No one is answerable to people as politics controls every sphere of life, shapes the way of people's life and, it is the supreme value. When political officials are out of accountability they can do anything they wish to do. None of the political leader is fairly accountable to the electorate. Here, unaccountability is usual fashion in public life. An elected political official can do whatever s/he wishes to do. Say for Union Parishad (UP) chairmen can do anything they please in his/her union. They can include or exclude anyone in beneficiary list of state provided citizen privileges such as relief goods, adult allowance etc. (Purboposhchimbd.new. 2020). They normally include their relatives and party men and exclude opposition party men. They control each and everything – bazar, transportation, business, law and order, education, healthcare, even marriage and religious life – of their locality (Kalerkantho, 2019). It seems they are the king of that territory and their will is law.

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

Muscle power > political affiliation > skipping court and justice > culture of impunity > unaccountability



**Figure -2: Cycle of unaccountability and culture of impunity**

Accountability is absent in every sector of public life – say it private or public, from small vendor to big businessman, junior officer to senior officer, farmer to day labor, rickshaw puller to bus contractor. Everybody is lawmaker and lawbreaker in their respective field. For example, the market of daily commodities is totally controlled by anarchy, here anarchy is the ruler. One vendor selling vegetables in van, say, can higher or lower the price by his own will (Bangla news, 2019). Staffs in public transport also make the fare higher or lower on their own, evidences are ample during the national festivals or any occasions without any legal evidence (Bangladesh Protidin, 2015). Nobody is there to check these irregularities. Take another example of fish market. Fish sellers have full control on the market price of fish across the country. They can increase or decrease the price of fish as they wish (Prothom alo, 2017). Price of beef, mutton and chicken also goes up and down in freaky ways (Financial Express, 2019).

### 2.6. Corruption and Abuse of power

It has been repeatedly proved by most global measures of corruption that Bangladesh is one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The country has been recurrently appeared at the top of the list of the most corrupt countries in Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Bangladesh has had a long history of authoritarian rule (1972-1990, 2009-present) and high levels of corruption. Despite the end of military rule and the restoration of democracy in Bangladesh in 1991, the country has faced a very difficult process of democratic consolidation. There has been developed a highly polarized politics, repeated anti-government movements designed to topple elected governments, and extremely high levels of political corruption. (Kochanek, 2010).

Using position while in power to grant undue favor and benefit to one's relatives, friends and key supporters is a hallmark of politics in Bangladesh. All the effective rulers have been accused of either direct or indirect involvement in large-scale of corruption. Corruption and abuse of power became a much talked issue in public life during the tenure of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman which lasted only three and a half years (1972-1975). Nepotism and favoritism in terms of granting financial benefits to Sheikh Mujib's close relatives and political associates gets well known. Leaders and activists of Awami League (AL) get undue privileges such as receiving job in nationalized industries and corporations, growing rich as smugglers, appropriating Pakistani houses and properties, selling off government permits and licenses (Kochanek, 1993). Awami League leaders, party supporters, and Mujib's relatives plundered the society in almost every way possible. Shekih Abu Naser, Sheik Mujibur's only brother, and his sisters get undue excessive financial and other benefits as relative of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Khan, 1997).

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated in August 1975 and after a series of military coups and counter coups General Ziaur Rahman took over in 1977 and dominated Bangladesh politics until his assassination in May 1981. Under Zia the legacy of rampant corruption of the previous government continued to get institutionalized. Zia was bound to accept corruption in public offices as fact of life and publicly admitted that corruption and the misuse of power had led to the misappropriation of 40 percent of the country's development funds. Zia, however, was personally free from corruption and nepotism. Corruption and abuse of power in Bangladesh under General H. M. Ershad become all-pervasive. During Ershad period mass people are forced to pay extra-legal fees to obtain routine application forms in public offices, to get custom clearances. During the Ershad years, major contracts for the

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

acquisition of aircraft for the state-owned airline, government food purchases, and contracts for large development projects were all subject to the payment of massive commissions that ranged between 20 and 40 percent of cost (Kochanek, 2010).

Although military dictatorial ruling came to an end and democratic system was introduced in 1991, nothing has been changed in the culture of omnipresent corruption. Governments under both the parties, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL), are accused of high scale of corruption. Bangladesh has been championed in corruption (2001-2005) under both party's governments. The extra constitutional military backed caretaker government (2007-2008) declared a massive drive against corruption and arrested corrupt politicians from both party. However, their effort ended in smoke because the government arrested only politicians not corrupt civil-military bureaucrats they remained free from this dubious drive. In recent years, scale of corruption and misuse of power in Bangladesh continues to reach in unprecedented level and it goes rampant in almost every sphere of life. A series of high profile corruption scandals, such as in the Padma Bridge project, the Railway Scandal, the Hall Mark Group scam, Destiny Group and last year's share market scam under the current Sheikh Hasina government, that involved high ranking ministers and officials has brought the credibility of the government under the scanner (Mehta, 2012).

A major hurdle in the way of ensuring good governance is clearly corruption in public offices. Previously, government officer took speed money or bribery for their service individually, although they are handsomely paid and privileged with other social and financial benefits. In addition to this old practice, there rise a new trend in corruption channel: now, government officials are getting involved in grand corruption scam collectively with politician. In recent months, series of big graft charges came out in different newspapers which raises the serious question regarding the transparency of some mega development projects of the government. The anomalies came under public attention and drew huge criticism when 'Pillow Scam' in Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, one of the government's ten mega projects, was published in the dailies. It is shown in the furniture purchase schedule that per piece pillow has been purchased at 5957 taka, 20 times higher than its market price which is only 250 – 300 taka, and taka 760 has been allocated to lift this item from ground floor to different floor of the building that has been built to house the officers and employees of the project (Table-3). Unbelievable anomalies are also found in procuring appliances of Faridpur Medical College. A bedside screen for ICU was purchased at 37.50 lakh taka (thirty-seven hundred and fifty thousand taka) which is many times higher than its regular price. The total bill for purchasing medical equipment was shown as 52.66 (\$ 526.6 million) crore Bangladeshi taka which actually costs Tk 11 crore (110 million) only. News report also calims that Bangladesh Railway sent a proposal to the Planning Commission where they recommended for Tk 4.20 lakh (400 and 20 thousand bdt) monthly salary for a cleaner and Tk 83,950 for office assistant, photocopy operator and computer operator Roy, 2019).

Huge inconsistencies are also found in government's official's unnecessary ridiculous foreign trip. To receive training on safe drinking water 41 officials of Chattogram WASA and concerned ministry toured Uganda spending a total 5 crores (\$50 million) public money and they got 200,000 taka as 'pocket money' apart from their travel allowances. Similarly, 16 officials of the Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) went abroad to receive training on how to excavate ponds and Tk 800,000 will be spent for each of the attendees (Roy, 2019). These are the few of innumerable graft cases unearthed by media. Thousands corrupt issues go under surface when trio – politicians, public servants and journalists – reach an unholy understanding. The government employees those who are accused of corruption have normally political connection with ruling party. Even their appointment is also politically biased.

**Table-3: Green City Housing Project Scam in Rooppur Power Plant**

Name of products	Price for per piece	Cost of lifting
Pillow	Tk 5,957	Tk 760
Electric Stove	Tk 7,747	Tk 6,650
Electric kettle	Tk 5,313	Tk 2,945
Room-cleaning machine	Tk 12,018	Tk 6,650
Eclectic iron	Tk 4,154	Tk 2,945
TV set	Tk 86,970	Tk 7,698
Refrigerator	Tk 94,250	Tk 12,521

Source: Daily Sun, September 27, 2019

Besides these big scams government officer's individual bribery and corruption has reached an endemic height. From top to bottom, local to central government offices and departments has been nucleus of corruption. Despite the increase in the salaries, government's employee salary doubled in 2016 that are unprecedented, with number of facilities of the public servants from time to time they remained highly corrupt but services in government offices is miserable. The situation has reached such a level due to different reasons. The deadly combination of excessive power and lack of accountability has made many government employees irresistible monsters. The government hardly takes the corruption of public servants into account. Surprisingly, journalists those who publish irregularities of the public officials have to face harassment, torture, illegal arrest and forced disappearance. Journalist Ariful Islam Regan's case is one of the best examples of such incidents where he was arrested as he reports irregularities of DC of



## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

Kurigram District (Badal, 2020). Although article 27 of Bangladesh Constitution says, “All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law” the government passed the Civil Service Bill 2018 only a few months before the eleventh parliamentary election which prevents police to arrest a government employee involved in any criminal offence. In 2013, a similar provision was passed, a month before tenth general election, which makes it mandatory for Anti-Corruption Commission to seek permission from the government before lodging case against government officials on graft charge (Roy, 2019). Such legal safeguard, motivated by political intention, for government employee adversely stimulates them to become more corrupt, arrogant and unaccountable resulting in keeping them loyal to and serving the interest of incumbent party not to the people. It is well-known to all that bypassing the spirit of civil service law and merit, skill and integrity, promotions and posting of the senior public servants are set on political grounds. In many cases, senior officials are superseded by their juniors just because of their political affiliation. Along with corruption, money laundering has been increased rapidly during the last decade (2009-2019). In their 2006-2015 report, Washington based Global Financial Integrity (GFI) showed that Bangladesh has been 2nd in Asia for illicit money flows. Only in 2015, \$ 6 billion has been transferred from Bangladesh illegally that equals to 50,000 crore in Bangladeshi taka (BBC, 2019).

### 2.7. Criminalization of Politics and Politicization of Crime

One of the biggest problems of Bangladesh politics is criminalization of politics or politicization of crimes. It is one the dominating features of Bangladesh politics which happens in two ways: either the direct entry or interference of criminals into the political parties, state legislatures and parliament of the country or politicians adopting criminal means to achieve their political goal. Broadly, it includes illegally financing any candidate, providing anti-social manpower, capturing polling booth, contract killing of rival candidates, providing muscle power services, as well as campaigning for any candidate contesting elections. Criminal practice in politics is not new in Bangladesh as records say that it is the legacy of past politics (Rahman, 2012).

**Table- 4: Criminal activities of MP-2016**

Illegal and Criminal activities of MP	Percentage (%)
Influencing administrative business	81.8
Controlling educational institutional	76.9
Misuse of development fund	75.5
Involvement of criminal activities	75.6
Influencing the decision of public procuring	69.2
Transgressing of electoral laws	62.2
Receiving Govt. land plot through false information	8.4
others	16.1

**Source:** Abak Bangladesh Bichitro Chholonajale Rajniti, Akbar Ali Khan

Criminal activities such as killing of and attacks on political opponents, grabbing state’s and people’s property by force and bribing government officials, rearing and bearing terrorist groups to narrow personal and political gain, vandalizing opposition’s party offices etc. were also recorded in Pakistani era (Khan, 2003). After liberation of Bangladesh this evil legacy continues to become a governing feature of Bangladesh politics. Undemocratic and criminal activities tainted all of the ruling parties of Bangladesh. To sustain in power and to regain power both incumbent party and oppositions nakedly engaged in criminal activities (Kochanek, 2010). To occupy political field and display muscle power party activists often involved in violent clash which claims their lives. Deadly political clash among political parties are commonplace in the country. It is only for power, money and false fame not for people’s interest. Competition for party post and public offices is so fear that a criminal politician even does not spare his own party-men (table-5). Therefore, intra party clash or confrontation is also leading feature of criminal politics.

**Table-5: Intra Party Clash, January-September 2017**

	Incident	Injured	Killed
AL - AL	115	1917	26
AL- Awami Jubo League	2	42	3
AL- Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL)	7	45	1
Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) - Awami Jubo League	5	38	
Awami Jubo League - Awami Jubo League	7	33	1
Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL)- Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL)	20	156	2
BNP-BNP	18	170	

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

BNP - Bangladesh Jatiyotabadi Chatra Dal (JCD)	1		
Jatiyotabadi Jubo Dol-Jatiyotabadi Jubo Dol	10	82	
Total	185	2483	32
<b>Source:</b> Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), political violence: January-September, 2017			

Lots of influential political leaders and activists such as MP, Upazila Chairman, Mayor and councilor of city corporation or municipality, UP Chairman accused of murder, grabbing people's and state's land and property, illegal transfer of money from the country, smuggling, human trafficking, gambling and illegal business. For example, Amanur Rahman Khan Rana, former law maker of Awami League (2012-2019), is accused of murder of Faruk Ahmed, Tangail district leader of Awami League (Daily Star, 2016). Another parliamentarian Mohammad Shahid Islam Papul, MP from Laxmipur -2 constituency, is accused of human trafficking from Bangladesh to Kuwait and making money through illegal business (Chowdhury, 2020). List of such politicians will be longer if it is counted. Therefore, it can be said that politics in Bangladesh is normally based on crime, illegal money and muscle power (Kochanek, 2010).

### 2.8. Commercialization of Power and Political Goal

Other than selected ministers in the cabinet, the elected officials in Bangladesh are Union Parishad (UP) member and Chairman, Upazila Chairman and councilor, Mayor of municipality and Member of Parliament. Because of growing commercialization of power, one has to spend huge money for his/her campaign or has to pay money to buy vote. For fair candidate – who are honest, skilled, but do not have huge or handsome amount of money to spend in election campaign, it is, therefore, hardly possible for them to contest in election. This money game gives spaces for businessmen to fight in election. They take it as an investment for future revenue or safeguard for their running business or expanding their business to possible extent. Either way, if any politician – who does not have any business or property but has muscle power – somehow can manage nomination from his party and pass in election can easily set up business. However, business type can be different on the basis of elected position: UP member or chairman, councilor of a municipality, is usually involved in land business, storage business, small and medium grocery business etc. whereas MP, Upzila chairman, ministers, mayor of big city corporations mostly do business in transport sector such as bus, launch and steamer, lubricant, flat and housing business, heavy industry such as garments, chemical and electronic manufacturer, telecommunication, coal and mining, big shopping mall, power and electricity, air and civil aviation, contract for mega project such as building roads and highways, power plant, voip business, export import business, wholesale car supply etc. This is the way how businessmen are creeping into politics in Bangladesh and real politicians become marginalized. Alternatively, businessmen invest money in election for politicians and after election they receive undue business privileges or try to formulate pro-business policy. Now money has been the determinant not only in election but also in Bangladesh politics. The opportunity for real political activists and leaders who have commitment to their people and country are getting increasingly marginalized day by day. This game is unique for all level – be it Union Parishad or Parliament, City Corporation or municipality. As a result, those who assume power and position in public offices are de facto businessmen and de jure people representative. Their main interest is to protect or expand their business or at least setting up new business farm. In their locality UP members are influential by means of their property, small or medium business, land property, muscle power etc. UP chairman themselves or their relatives collect government relief goods or SSNP goods from union Parishad in cheaper rate and then they sell these goods in local markets in higher rate.

**Table-6: Major Profession of Elected Members of Parliament**

The Parliament	Lawyer (%)	Business (%)	Agro (%)	Teacher (%)
1st Parliament	31	18	11	12
2nd Parliament	26	24	13	6
5th Parliament	15	38	11	7
7th Parliament	16	43	8	8
8th Parliament	12	58	7	8
9th Parliament	14	57	7	1
10th Parliament	13	59	5	2

**Source:** Adopted From BIGD, The State of Governance Bangladesh 2014-2015. Dhaka.

Securing business interest in disguise of serving people's interest has been the goal of politics in Bangladesh. This is why more and more businessmen are intruding in political life of the nation. The trend of intrusion is significantly alarming as the ratio of the real politician are declining in parliament. Percentage of businessmen was only 18% in the first parliament whereas it sharply rises to nearly 60% in tenth parliament (table-6). It is very difficult to distinguish what is political goal and what is private goal. It is widely perceived that politics itself has been a business and commerce. People are coming in politics with very private motive in mind

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

rather cherishing attitudes of serving public good. Evidences are abundant that status of private wealth of a political leader – central or local, senior and junior – are changed dramatically before and after joining politics. Sometimes, MPs are accumulating wealth from public fund in the name of business run by their relatives – mostly by their wife, son or daughter and in-laws. Big business corporations – power and energy, ICT, export-import, transportation, airways, waterways, petrol pumps, medium and small business – are occupied by politicians. They are creeping in to politics to secure private gains. Evidence are profuse that amount of their wealth and property before and after joining politics are changed dramatically in the country (Hossain, 2015, Sagor, 2018). Grasp of river, canal, govt. land, public fund, public money, khas land, illegal subscriptions, tender, smuggling, drug, arms business, loan defaulter, share market, public insurance are some of the vivid examples (Sagor, 2018). Bureaucrats are doing politics because of securing their position, post, extra privileges – jobs for relatives e.g. son/daughter, scholarships, loan in special concessions, and after retirement reward such as nomination for MPs, chairman and president of big public corporations, project directors.

### 3. BUSINESS INTEREST, CONFLICT AND CHALLENGES IN GOVERNANCE

#### 3.1. Business and Power: Why do businessmen intrude into politics in Bangladesh?

In Bangladesh, politics becomes all-pervasive, it controls everything. Almost all of sphere of public life is being politicized. Political influence or partisan identity and bribery are the two effective parameters of receiving legal citizen from public offices. To receive government service and privileges such as license for business and driving, car registration, passport, land registration, utility service (gas, water, and electricity), treatment in government hospitals and education, one either has to show political influence or pay bribe to government officials. Showing political identity of ruling party or becoming closer to a powerful politician, a layman even can earn huge wealth and can be a growing leader. Therefore, businessmen join politics to expand and stabilize their business.

#### 3.2. Commercialization of Power: What happens when businessmen join politics?

As explained above, a businessman's prime objective is to maximize profit, expand business area. Therefore, when a businessman comes to power or elected as public official abuse his position and power to pursue his/her business. Pro-business politicians influence government's decision and policy in favor of their corporation and public institutions and its interest go down, state becomes looser in terms of economy and other values. Interest of the mass people is dropped from the agenda; the private business firms occupy the place. Government health service, mobile operator, railway, education and telecommunication are not developing, because these cannot get attention of policymakers. For better treatment and education people have to go private hospitals and schools. That's why state run institution is not developed in Bangladesh. Thus, it becomes clear that if power gets commercialized, the favor of the state and mass people get narrow down.

#### 3.3. How does the business interest generate crises for governance in Bangladesh?

Politics is now, as observed above, mainly businessmen's game or competition for maximizing profit or accumulation of wealth. Sixty per cent lawmaker of Bangladesh's parliament are businessmen (table-6). These businessmen-cum-politician's principal objective is to maximizing profit of their business. As a result, government institutions, that serve mainly mass people interest, such as Teletalk, only state-owned mobile operator, railway and Nagad, government run mobile banking etc. cannot be profitable institution. The reason is simple: if these state-owned firms proliferate in business then private companies, whose owners are politician – MP, senior civil or military officer, chairman, mayor, will be loser. Lawmakers, therefore, are not interested in making public institutions better and profitable.

Conflict arises not just from popular demands for participation and welfare but also from underlying changes in the power structure. As the aim and objective of joining politics is to amass wealth and property, therefore, old and new comer are getting at loggerhead and embroil. Because in the developing country, like Bangladesh, resources are limited, therefore, competition is fierce. Given the context, parties are involved often sanguinary clash and violent confrontation, sometime manifest sometime hidden. These clashes are not just political, not for political stability, not for good governance, rather these clashes are merely for securing their positions that earn them plethora of wealth, property and privileges. The diagram below demonstrates the conflict cycle:

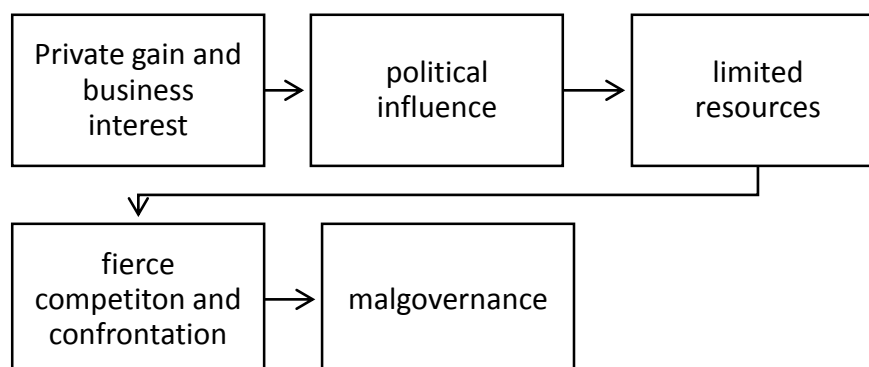


Figure-3: Conflict Cycle

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

“The owners of the transport are not general people, they are influential and powerful”. – Obaidul Quader - Minister of Road Transport and Bridges. (April 23, 2017. Daily Inqilab)

Race for private gain and confrontation lead to mal-governance and anarchy in public life. The most of the owners of private company or farms are political activists and leaders. They, therefore, hardly care for established rules and regulations. Using political identity and position they can easily escape any punishment and fine imposed by police and court which results in culture of impunity. As the business interest is the sole objective of political activists and leaders, it is very difficult to keep the governance up to the mark. Here government itself become helpless. Another central point is that majority of the executive and parliamentary body of the government are businessmen. Very ministers and MPs are deterrence of governance. They are not ready to accept any loss to their business, as a result public interests are in peril.

To illustrate governance crisis, in this section, examples have been drawn from the transportation sector. This is one of the anarchic public sector in Bangladesh. Due to the mal-governance on an average 12 thousand people died in every year in road accident (Champa, M. 2019). Every day 20 persons are died on average. Ninety per cent (90%) of these accidents are occurred due to reckless driving and excessive speed. At least 90% of accidents are happening due to excessive speed and reckless driving. Rest ten per cent (10%) are due to other anomalies relating to roads and high ways. In the country, early cost of accident is BDT 40 thousand crore which is 2-3% annual GDP (Rahman, S. 2018). Another survey conducted by Center for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB) states that 64 people per day and 23,166 people per annum are died in road accident on an average. The total GDP of Bangladesh is 17 lakh crore. 2% of this amount is 34 thousand crore (Dey, 2017).

The table (table-7) below displays the most infamous and desperate 30 transport company in the country. 26 companies out of 30 are occupied by political activists and leaders of different political parties or the owner somehow politically influential. It is observed that those companies are politically influential their drivers and contractors are are mostly erratic. Owner of 16 transportation companies out of 30 are belongs to Awami League – they are leaders, activists and supporters. Rest of the ten have also strong political association with either BNP or Jatiyo Party. Some of the top ten Transportation Companies who are seriously accused of road accident are Ena Poribahan, Jabale Noor, Tisha, Turag, Hanif, Bihango etc (Table-8).

**Table-7: Owner of the Transportation Company and Political Association**

Sl.	Name of the transport	Owner/Managing Director/Chairman	Relatives of	Name of Party	Position in the Party
1.	Jabale noor	Md. Nannu Mia	Brother in-law of Shajahan Khan	Awami League	Activist
2.	Shikhor Poribahan	Mahmood Hossen		Jatyo Party	
3.	Projapoti	Ex MP Shahida Tareq		Awami League	
4.	Sharbik Poribahan	Relatives of Shajahan Khan		Awami League	
5.	Ena Poribahan	Khondokar Enayetullah		Awami League	Vice President of Dhaka City South
6.	Bihango Poribahan	Ponkoj Devnath		Awami League	MP and General Secretary of Sbecchasebak League
7.	Tetulia Poribahan	Abdul Wadud		Awami League	Leader
8.	Anabil Poribahan	Jewel Dewan (MD)		Awami League	Leader
9.	Great Turag	Jewel Dewan		Awami League	
10.	Swapno Services	Ashrafunnesa Mosharoff		Awami League	Ex MP in Reserve Seat and President of Mohila League
11.	Trans Silva BD	Mukul Mridah (MD)	Brother of Habibur Rahman Molla	Awami League	Adviser of Dhaka City South
12.	Rayda Poribahan	Iqbal Hossen (Chairman)		-	-

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

13.	Shyamoli Poribahan	Romesh Chandra Ghosh		-	-
14.	Green Line	Haji Alauddin		-	-
15.	Eagle Poribahan	Ashok Ronjon		-	-
16.	Kanak Poribahan	Azizur Rahman Khan	Brother of Shajhan Khan	Awami League	Presidium Member and Minister
17.	Shamim Enterprise	Momtazul Islam	Brother of Motiur Rahman	Awami League	Minister of Religious Affairs
18.	Dhaka Poribahan	Mirza Abbas		BNP	Member in Standing Committee
19.	Showkhin Poribahan	Mirza Abbas		BNP	Member in Standing Committee
20.	S R Poribahan	G M Siraj		BNP	Ex MP and Leader
21.	Hanif Poribahan	Md. Hanif	Brother of AL leader M Kafil Uddin	BNP	Savar BNP Leader
22.	Khaleq Enterprise	S A Khaleq		BNP	Ex MP and Leader
23.	Desh Bangla Poribahan	Faridur Rahman Iran		Awami League	Councilor of Dhaka City North. Secchasebak League
24.	Shonchita Poribahan	Moshiur Rahman Ranga		Jatya Partiya	Ex Minister and Leader
25.	S A Poribahan	Salahuddin Ahmed		Jatya Partiya	Leader
26.	Star Line	Md. Alauddin		Jatya Partiya	Activist
27.	Sakura Paribahan	Md. Cchunnu Mia		Awami League	Leader
28.	Dipjal Poribahan	Monwar Hossen Dipjal		BNP	Leader
29.	N Mallick Poribahan Ltd.	Nargis Mallick		Awami League	Dohar Upzila Leader
30.	VIP Classic	Zohirul Haque		Awami League	Dhaka City North OS

Source: Bangla Tribune

<http://www.banglatribune.com/national/news/380217/>

**Table-8: Most Reckless 10 Transportation Company**

Sl.	Name of the Transport	Owner	Political Affiliation
1.	Ena Poribahan	Khondokar Enayetullah	Awami League
2.	Ajmeri	-	-
3.	Asia	Julhas Hossen	-
4.	Bihango	Ponkoj Devnath	Awami League
5.	Padma Line	-	-
6.	Parijat	-	-
7.	Turag	Jewel Dewan	Awami League
8.	Tisha	Zaman Hossen Bhuyan (Khokon)	-
9.	Jabale Noor	Md. Nannu Mia	-
10.	Hanif	Md. Hanif	BNP

Source: Bangladesh Protidin, Samakal and Bangla Tribune

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

The bus company hand over their vehicle to drivers and helpers on contractual basis for a fixed time period, in return contractors are bound to provide fixed amount of money. After paying off company's amount, the contractors move for their own share. Companies often increase their share which ultimately exert extra pressure on leasers. To save and proliferate their share or some time for extra benefits leasers go hasty and rushed to the destination. They accelerate vehicle's speed up to the extreme level which leads to accident when driver cannot control the vehicle. Again, they got involved in an unruly and illegal competition with others contractors. When two or more vehicles compete to overtake each other to catch more and more passengers they come into vehement collision and accident which takes lives of passengers and driver himself.

Although bus is the leading mode of public transport in Dhaka city, the condition in which the buses ply the city's roads is appalling. It has become difficult for the commuters to commute by bus as there are very few designated bus stoppages in the city. The drivers often stop in the middle of the road to pick up or drop off passengers, which is a leading cause of road accidents. Moreover, many of the buses are unlicensed and unfit, and are also run by underage drivers with fake driving licenses. But the authorities concerned seem to be totally oblivious to the situation as they do not take any step to control the mismanagement of the bus services. Because of the insufficient number of BRTC buses, the private sector has created a monopoly, taking control over the public transport. They raise the bus fare at their own will, without caring for public interest. Many of the bus services charge an extra amount for providing seating service, but pick-up passengers from the middle of the road to make an extra profit. If electronic punch tickets could be introduced, it would have saved the passengers a lot of hassle.

Secondly, although Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), City Corporation and association of owners of transport fix the rate of fare the labors – driver, helper and contractor – can up and down the rate of fare as they please. It happens during some social and religious occasions, say, Eid vacation, and at the moment when they find it suitable particularly during the crisis of transport any area of the city. Apart from this if government raises the price of lubricant, bus fare goes up automatically without any previous approval from concerned authority. They can charge the fare as they wish as if they are the authority (Mahmud, R. 2011). During this time tussle between passengers and transport labors is usual incident. This wrangle some time leads to physical assault even death of the passenger (Daily Star, 2019).

Thirdly, the transport labor organizations are of a great force. The number and size of the labor in the sector are huge. According to BRTA the number of registered motor vehicles in the country are 29 lakh 48 thousand and 906. For every single vehicle there are at least two labors – driver and helper – while for bus and minibus at least three people – driver, helper and contractor – are working. If we take on an average 2 labors for a vehicle then total manpower in the sector roughly 60 lakhs (Siddiq, A.B., 2017). This force can be used for political or extra political purpose. The leaders of the organization have strong control on labors through which they can take the advantages of using this greater force. The leaders usually have affiliation, direct or indirect, with political party. When needed, they abuse power of this organization, for example if leaders' party in office they want to prevent opposition party's democratic movement and peaceful program through withdrawing transport service across the country or while leaders' party in opposition they use the organizational force to paralyze the transport system which eventually may topple the government. A normal call of strike of labor or owner of the transport agency leads to a total shutdown of the country's public life.

Those who run and control the transport workers organizations are the same persons who simultaneously in government, the owners of vehicle and labor leaders. Although political strife is serious in Bangladesh, for business purpose, the political leaders from different parties work together in public transport sector. Shajahan Khan at a time is presidium member of Awami League, the highest executive body of the party, minister of Shipping (209-2019), president of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation. He was much criticized due to his notorious role as the transport workers leader, he opposed the Sarak Paribahan Ain-2018 (Road Transportation Act-2018) and pressurized the government to amend the act and reduce the punishment described in the law for intentional accident in the road. Interestingly, the eleventh parliament placed him as the chief of 15-member committee to prevent accident in roads and highway which sparked huge backlash (Daily Star, 2019). Shamsur Rahman Shimul Biswas, special assistant to BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, and Osman Ali, leader of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), are the joint secretary and secretary general of the same body. Another influential transport businessman is Mashiur Rahman Ranga, he is State Minister for Local Government, General Secretary of Jatyo Party and president of Bangladesh Road Transport owner's association (Mahmud, 2018). So, it is apparent that leaders and activists from all political parties play critical role in transport sector. Here, business, politics and profit go together.

Fourthly, changing service type frequently from local to direct, normal to seating is another type of crisis for transport governance. Transport labors change service type and fare rate not on the basis of authoritative decision but on their own discretion. There are ample evidences of such type of irregularities in roads of Dhaka city. Consequently, people are simple prey of their arbitrariness. They can do whatever they like because they know that they don't have to be answerable to anybody or any authority. This culture of unaccountability has been embedded in almost all section of the public life of the country. Besides this, justice-less-ness is another formidable public culture of Bangladeshi society. Here, perpetrator can escape punishment through political or bribe mechanism. If someone is politically influential and powerful or at least he has solid connection with ruling party he can easily manage court and

## Dynamics of Bangladeshi Politics: Business Interest, Conflict and Challenges in Governance

skip punishment and fines. Even an indicted of murder case can be from and get pardon from President of the state in political consideration (Sadik, A. 2018). If anybody does not have political connection, he has another mechanism that is bribery (bdnews24.com, 2019). It is often more effective than former one.

Fifthly, more the owner powerful, the more the driver desperate and fierce. Obaidul Quader - Minister of Road Transport and Bridges – maintains that the owners of the transport are not general people, they are influential and powerful” (April 23, 2017. Daily Inqilab). It is clearly evident that if the owner of a transport is politically powerful and influential the labors of that company are more desperate and fiercer. They demonstrate their power with passengers. They don't care about traffic rules and regulations, don't mind what can be the consequence of being desperate. Because they know it is easier to escape the punishment as their company is politically powerful and influential. Another significant factor that has made transport labor more reckless is that they know that passengers are helpless and there will be no law suit in any court and punishment. Although there is any case filed against them it is not certain that he can be punished as the case usually takes a complex and delay process – two three or even five years. In the meantime, he can manage court and police through his company's boss.

Finally, other than abovementioned factors, there are some more components which are also responsible in the same degree for anarchy in public transport. These are corruption and abuse of power of BRTA staff and officers, License-less and inapt driver, drug addicted driver and helper, lack of proper training for transport workers, insufficient road and traffic jam, illegal parking and mass people's unconsciousness and negligence regarding traffic rules and regulations. Corruption in BRTA offices is one of the major factors why anarchy is prevailing in public transport sector. To get driving license fully skilled driver has to pay bribe money otherwise he will not receive license or it will be lingered whereas If officials and staffs are bribed, an unfit driver even can get driving license sooner.

### 4. CONCLUSION

The study examines the dynamics of Bangladesh politics and finds that snowballing influence of business professional in politics is the dominant feature of the polity. The percentage of businessmen are rapidly growing in politics that results in, on the one hand, narrowing down of the public interest and expanding businessmen's interest in government decision, on the other. Control over government decision-making processes becomes crucial for maintaining business, which in turn is crucial for maintaining political control. 'You cannot do business without doing politics', and you cannot do politics without doing business. As the businessmen are dominating politics and government body, the decision of the government by nature are pro-business not pro-people. Even for maintaining business interest these businessmen cum political officials (elected officers for public offices such as minister, MP, member and chairman in Upazila, mayor and councilor in city corporation and pourashova etc.) are ready to sacrifice the people's interest. Government become helpless in the face of confrontation. Their profit get winner over the government and peoples' interest. It is evident in one of the most import sectors – public transport – of the government. This significant sector is totally controlled by businessmen although government have partial influence. Most of the time, government become helpless when both parties come to confrontation. They can even paralyze the government through ill mechanism such as illegal strike and keeping the vehicles stop. Thus, it proves that business interest leads to a confrontation between government and business body which ultimately generates crisis in governance in almost all other section of the nation like transportation sector.

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