

Bangladesh

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The first leader of Bangladesh coded by Archigos, Syed Nazrul Islam of the Awami Muslim League (AL) was “acting” president of a “provisional government” that was set up in April 1971 (US Department of State 2010). Cahoon (2010) refers to Syed Nazrul Islam as “acting for Mujibur Rahman”. In December, the country formally gained independence from Pakistan. The country is considered non-democratic in 1971. In 1972 Mujibur Rahman “Mujib” of the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) officially became PM. This is not a SOLS change. From 1972 until 1974 the country is considered a parliamentary democracy, though we are missing coding from Cheibub et al. to determine the type of democratic regime and Geddes codes a single-party-personalist regime throughout. The U.S. Department of State (2010) explains: “The new constitution, which came into force in December 1972, created a strong executive prime minister, a largely ceremonial presidency, an independent judiciary, and a unicameral legislature on a modified Westminster model.” Thus, we consider Bangladesh to be a parliamentary democracy. In 1974, PM Rahman instituted an executive presidency and a one-party system (U.S. Department of State 2010). Starting in 1974 the country is once again considered a single-party-personalist-hybrid autocracy. In January 1975 Rahman’s title changed from PM to president.

Some of Rahman’s policies seem to have angered nationalist forces in the military (Ali 2010, 116) and he was murdered in a coup of renegade officers who did not have the generals’ support (117). The majors installed Khundaqar Mushtaq Ahmed, “former Mujib associate” (US Department of State 2010) and a member of BAL, as president. Note that Mustaque was not the vice president, but only one of a many ministers. Within hours of Rahman’s death, the military swore loyalty to Mushtaq although tensions arose quickly and he tried to “box in” the military (Ali 2010, 120-121). Mustaque made the officers who assassinated Rahman to his advisers, which the military leaders did not appreciate (120). All his ministers were civilians (120). However, Mushtaq never got full control over the military (121). Mushtaq was apparently more successful at removing threats from his party, the Awami League, of which he arrested a number of leaders (121). It seems that a number of them were also massacred and Mushtaq gave immunity to the killers immediately (Karlekar 2005, 50). This leadership transition is difficult to code because, on the one hand, Mushtaq had the same party as Mujib and was his associate, but on the other hand, “his role in the new regime was circumscribed by the majors (US Library of Congress 1988)” who had assassinated, he repeatedly had to contend with Mujib’s supporters (US Library of Congress 1998), and he clearly tried to circumscribe the power of his party and even expunged members of it. Mushtaq was not Mujib’s pre-designated successor. Thus we code a SOLS change here.

In November 1975, the Mujib loyalists staged a successful counter coup and Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem, who had “served Mujib in the Supreme Court” (US Library of Congress 1988), Non-Party, became president but Archigos already codes Ziaur Rahman as leader here. This is another SOLS change since Zia goes on to establish his own personalist regime. Ziaur was the de facto leader after the removal of Mustaque, acting initially through Sayem and becoming president himself in 1977. In 1978 Zia established the Bengal Nationalist Party (BJD). This is not a SOLS change.

When Zia was assassinated in 1981, his vice president Abdus Sattar, BJD, became “acting” president and later won elections (US Library of Congress 1988). This is not a SOLS change since Sattar can be considered Zia’s pre-designated successor. Sattar was a civilian and, unlike Zia, had only weak ties to the military so when he tried to limit the military’s influence Major General Ershad removed him from power and installed himself as president. We code this as a SOLS change since Ershad went on to establish his own personalist regime that lasted until 1990. In September 1986 Ershad resigned as army chief and established the Jatiyo Dal (JD). In 1989, “opposition to Ershad's rule began to regain momentum, escalating by the end of 1990 in frequent general strikes, increased campus protests, public rallies, and a general disintegration of law and order (US Department of State 2010).” As a result, Ershad resigned and Shahabuddin Ahmed, Non-Party, became “acting” president as part of an interim government (US Department of State; Cahoon 2010). (In 1990 the authoritarian country is missing coding on regime type.) This is not a SOLS change.

Starting in 1991 Bangladesh is considered a parliamentary democracy. In 1991, the center-right BJD won the democratic elections and Khaleda Zia (BJD), the widow of Ziaur Rahman, became PM. This is a SOLS change. Khaleda Zia’s government came under criticism after a potentially rigged by-election and opposition started protesting the government massively. “In March 1996, following escalating political turmoil, the sitting Parliament enacted a constitutional amendment to allow a neutral caretaker government to assume power and conduct new parliamentary elections” (U.S. Department of State 2010). Mohammad Habibur Rahman, Non-Party, became acting PM (WKB, Worldstatemen). This is not a SOLS change. Later that year, after elections, Sheikh Hasina Wazed (BAL) became PM and coalition with the JD (Jatiya Party) and JSD-Rab1 (Jatiyo Samajtantric Dal). (This is an odd case where other parties were included in the cabinet without a formal coalition. See Zaman 1999, xxxi; Woldendorp et al. 2000, 122; and Johnson 2005, 52.)

The transition to Wazed is a regular SOLS change. On September 14, 1997, JD withdrew its support from Wazed’s coalition, and here we code a minor SOLS change (See *BC Cycle*. 09/14/1997; and United States Department of State 2010. Although Woldendorp et al. do not record this change in coalition, these other sources indicate that the JD did indeed leave at this time.) Because of increasing unrest under the Awami League government, in July 2001 “the Awami League government stepped down to allow a caretaker government to preside over parliamentary elections” (US Department of State 2010). Latifur Rahman, Non-Party, became acting PM. This is not a SOLS change. Later that year, after elections, Khaleda Zia, BJD, once again became PM. This is a SOLS change. According to the Department of State, she led a four-party alliance that was formed during the time these parties were in opposition against Wazed. Based on news research, the parties appear to have been the Jamaat-e-Islami, Jatiya Party, and Islami Oikya Jote (OIJ). (The Independent, October 11, 2001). The ruling coalition holds until massive opposition forced Zia out of office.

In 2006, Iajuddin Ahmed, Non-Party, became “chief advisor” (PM) to another caretaker government (US Department of State 2010). This is not a SOLS change. In 2007 Ahmed “declared a state of emergency, resigned as Chief Adviser, and indefinitely postponed parliamentary elections” (U.S. Department of State 2010). The military instituted yet another caretaker government (TIME 2008). Starting in 2007 the country is considered to be ruled by a

military authoritarian regime, yet the leaders appear to be civilians. Fazlul Haque, Non-Party, took over after Ahmed's resignation for one day as interim leader. (Because he is not coded by Archigos, we don't code him either.) He was immediately replaced by Fakhruddin Ahmed, Non-Party. This is a SOLS change. Elections were held in 2008 that were considered free and fair (U.S. Department of State 2010). The new government did not take office until 2009.

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