

DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM

AMEMBASSY DACCA

ACTION: POL
INFO: AMB
DCM
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CHRON
ECON

Classification

CONT: 2666
RCVD: 20 AUG 75
0609

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUMJDK/AMEMBASSY DACCA IMMEDIATE 5829
INFO RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1518
RUSBD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5118
BT

STATE 197340

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BG

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR CALLS ON ASSISTANT
SECRETARY ATHERTON

REF: DACCA 4020

1. SUMMARY. BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR HOSSAIN ALI CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON TUESDAY, AUGUST 19 AT HIS INITIATIVE. AMBASSADOR ALI PRESENTED REASONS FOR COUP, EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL REGRET AT DEATH OF MUJIB, AND REPORTED NEW BDG'S INTENTION TO CARRY ON FOREIGN RELATIONS ALONG THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-ALIGNMENT, WITH A NEW EMPHASIS ON GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL THE SUPERPOWERS. HE DISCUSSED NEW BDG'S HOPE FOR RECONCILIATION WITH PAKISTAN AND CONTINUED GOOD RELATIONS WITH INDIA. ATHERTON REITERATED USG'S INTENTION TO CONTINUE NORMAL RELATIONS, INCLUDING ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH BDG. END SUMMARY.
2. AMBASSADOR ALI'S PRESENTATION FOLLOWED SAME THEMES OUTLINED BY FAKHRUDDIN AHMED (REFTEL). AFTER DESCRIPTION OF INADEQUACIES OF MUJIB'S ADMINISTRATION, HE EXPRESSED HIS REGRET OVER NECESSITY FOR KILLING MUJIB, WHILE REPEATING THAT HE DID NOT KNOW THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING HIS DEATH. DRAWING ON HIS CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WITH NEW PRESIDENT KHONDAKAR MUSHTAQUE AHMED DURING 1971 IN CALCUTTA, HE DESCRIBED HIM AS "PIOUS, HONEST AND STRAIGHT FORWARD."
3. IN DISCUSSING NEW BDG'S FOREIGN RELATIONS, ALI STATED THAT HE WISHED TO INFORM US OF BANGLADESH'S INTENTION

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TO ADHERE TO PRINCIPLES WHICH HAVE GOVERNED ITS FOREIGN POLICY, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF UN CHARTER AND FIVE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE. WHILE BDG WILL CONTINUE NON-WIGNED POLICY, IT WILL, HOWEVER, PLACE EMPHASIS ON GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL GREAT POWERS. HE DID NOT ELABORATE, BUT REMARKED, "YOU WILL UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS MEANS." (WE UNDERSTOOD THIS TO REFER TO LESSENING OF SOVIET IMPORTANCE.)

4. IN SPEAKING OF SUBCONTINENT, ALI STATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS AMONG VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE AREA. SPECIFICALLY, IT HOPES THAT SOME OF PROBLEMS WITH PAKISTAN CAN BE SOLVED. BANGLADESH, SURROUNDED BY INDIA, WILL SEEK GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBOR. BANGLADESH WILL OF COURSE CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN ITS SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE.

5. IN REPLY, MR. ATHERTON SPOKE OF THE USG'S REGRET AT DEATH OF MUJIB AND HIS FAMILY, AND STRESSED THAT USG INTENDS TO CONTINUE NORMAL RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH. WE WELCOME NEW BDG'S REITERATION OF ITS INTENTION TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION IN THE SUBCONTINENT. OUR EMBASSY IN DACCA HAS RESPONDED TO THE BDG'S NOTE, AND OUR AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO MAINTAIN NORMAL CONTACTS. AMBASSADOR ALI ASKED ABOUT ECONOMIC COOPERATION, AND MR. ATHERTON INFORMED HIM THAT ECONOMIC COOPERATION WILL CONTINUE. BOTH AGREED THAT A SPEEDY CONCLUSION OF PL 480 NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE DESIRABLE. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO NOTED INTEREST OF EARLIER GOVERNMENT IN LA TITILE II PROGRAM AND EXPRESSED HOPE THIS WOULD BE FEASIBLE. M ATHERTON SAID WE WOULD LOOK INTO THIS QUESTION.

6. AMBASSADOR ALI SAID THAT HE HAS BEEN ASKED TO REMAIN AT HIS POST UNTIL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. HE PLANS TO ATTEND THE COMMONWEALTH FINANCE MINISTERS' MEETING IN GUYANA AUGUST 26-30 AS HEAD OF BANGLADESH DELEGATION.
KISSINGER

DECLASSIFIED
A/ISS/PS, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
October 31, 2007

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