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We promise to establish the rule of law, which will be administered by honest and competent people, and a prosperous Bangladesh.

Election Manifesto

2008

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami

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In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficent.

Bangladesh Jindabad (Long Live Bangladesh!)

Election Manifesto- 2008

We promise to establish the rule of law, which will be administered by honest and competent people, and a prosperous Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami

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Introduction

Our beloved free and sovereign Bangladesh came into being with the limitless sacrifice and hardship of the freedom fighters, the best of the nation, and with the sacrifice and tireless hard-work of the mass people. The people of this country in general are deeply religious on the one hand, and bearers and promoters of democracy on the other. By the grace of Allah, this country has plenty of natural resource and capable manpower. Therefore, it is very much possible to build a prosperous and strong Bangladesh by employing the human and natural resources of the country.

The aims of the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami are: economic emancipation and social justice, inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony, cultural enrichment, preservation of our history and tradition, protection of the freedom and sovereignty of Bangladesh, establishing the rights and welfare of people of all walks of life irrespective of their socio-economic background, religion, class and caste, and after all the materialisation of all constructive, welfare-oriented and humanitarian steps to develop the country. To realise these goals, Jamaat-e-Islami seeks to establish a corruption-free, oppression- and persecution-free, poverty- and hunger-free, prosperous and free Bangladesh where there will be peace and security and where every man and woman will enjoy complete human rights and dignity.

In order to materialise the abovementioned aims and objectives, Jamaat-e-Islami will keep cooperating with all democratic and patriotic forces in their welfare- and people-oriented, constitutional and democratic policies and programmes of work for the interest of the country. It will maintain its opposition to all conspiracies and plots against national interests and against the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. As an initial step to establish an Islamic welfare state, the existing laws of the country will be improved in order to make them well-timed, and eventually a modern welfare state will be established through comprehensive administrative reforms. Jamaat believes that only an elected government can gradually establish a strong and prosperous welfare state with confidence, trust, support and cooperation of the people.

Five Years of Jote Sarker (coalition government / four-party alliance government)

In the wake of the 2001 general election, a four-party alliance was formed in order to get rid of all forms of misrule, to protect the freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, to undertake programmes of economic reconstruction and poverty alleviation, to restore press freedom, to wipe out terrorism and corruption, to

re-establish the fundamental rights of the people, to give democracy an institutional shape and to ensure genuine voting rights of the people. The four-party alliance announced to take part in elections unitedly under one banner and, if elected, to form a coalition government. The country witnessed a voting revolution in 2001 in a real sense, and the four-party alliance was elected to power by the people by a big margin.

According to its announcement, the four-party alliance formed the government. As part of the alliance, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami shared power for the first time. From amongst the 300 seats in the national parliament, Jamaat had 17 and it had 2 ministers in the government. Later on, Jamaat had 4 additional female members of parliament from among the 30 reserved seats for women. After running the country successfully for five years, the four-party alliance transferred power to a care-taker government on 29 October 2006.

Success of Jote Sarker

During the rule of the Jote Sarker:

- * Effective measures were taken to wipe out terrorism from the country.
- * Efforts were made to create stability in political culture and to create an atmosphere of peaceful political co-existence.
- * Gross national income and economic growth were increased by 7%.
- * Huge progress was made in order to achieve self-sufficiency in food.
- * Per capita income was increased from US\$340 to US\$482. Development expenditure by domestic resources was increased from 42% to 58%.
- * Through a poverty alleviation programme, the poverty rate was reduced by 9% and the extreme poverty rate was reduced from 24% to 18%.
- * Measures were taken to maintain a favourable investment climate in order to attract foreign investment.
- * As part of initiatives to expand female education, the government undertook female education stipend programmes, separate vocational training and other institutional education for women.
- * The disability benefit system and a programme of interest-free loan for the disabled were introduced.
- * Education, health and medical services were expanded.
- * A national pay scale was introduced.
- * Information technology was made easily available and the country entered the information superhighway. There was huge expansion of telephone and mobile phone services.
- * Within a short time, with the help of the people, especially the ulama of the country, extremist bombers were apprehended, their network was destroyed and they were taken to the court and tried speedily.
- * Education was given the utmost importance and was given the highest budget allocation. All measures were taken to ensure that students do not adopt unfair means in examinations, and thus to develop them into competent and useful citizens.
- * The madrassa stream of education was given equal importance. Fazil and kamil were given bachelor and masters degree equivalence respectively.

- * It was decided to recognise the certificates of the quomi madrassa system.
- * A huge number of schools, colleges and madrassas were established.
- * The country witnessed huge infrastructural development.
- * The rural economy was given a significant boost.

In addition, the Jote Sarker took many other welfare programmes in order to develop the country into a stable, prosperous and democratic state.

Success of Jamaat

By taking part in the government of the last Jote Sarker, the two ministers of Jamaat have proved that it is very much possible to run a country with efficiency and competence by remaining free from corruption, nepotism and all forms of injustice. A big proof of this is that, during the anti-corruption drive by the present caretaker government, despite all sorts of inquiry and investigation, no trace of corruption was found in the two ministries headed by the two Jamaat ministers. As part of Jamaat's success story, the following points are worth mentioning:

- * Apart from playing their constructive roles in the national parliament, the Jamaat MPs brought about a resurgence of development work in many parts of the country with their utmost honesty and sincerity.
- * While the Ameer (President) of Jamaat was the Agriculture Minister of Jote Sarker, he brought about a revolution in the agriculture sector throughout the country and took measures to achieve self-sufficiency in food.
- * Production of exportable agricultural goods was widely increased.
- * In order to eradicate poverty and to empower the peasants, a project called "chashir bari – bagan bari" [the home of the farmer is a garden and orchard] was introduced.
- * In order to sell agricultural goods easily, community markets were established.
- * As part of the tree plantation programme, planting fruit trees was emphasised; and thus a new era of fruit production was heralded.
- * At administrative level, a full-time director general was appointed to head agricultural research institutes.
- * At field level, positions of 12,000 block supervisors were upgraded to deputy-assistant agriculture officers. This epoch-making step boosted their sincerity and interest in agricultural development.
- * For rapid industrialisation, eradication of unemployment, employment generation and for establishing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) around the country, an industrial policy known as Industrial Policy 2005 (IP-2005) was formulated and the SME development strategy 2005 was undertaken.
- * For poverty alleviation and employment generation and to accelerate economic growth, the Small and Medium Enterprise Foundation (Bangladesh) was established.
- * Modernisation of the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), establishment of the National Accredital Board and the formation of the directorate of patent, design and trademark by combining the offices of patent and trademark registry were materialised.
- * Closed-down industries such as the caustic-chlorine plant of the Karnaphuli Paper

Mills and the Khulna Hard Board Mill were re-started.

* In order to generate employment for women and to ensure women's participation in small and cottage industries, a step was taken to establish a national entrepreneur forum.

* The National Productivity Organisation was modernised to ensure a successful fertiliser system and the development of small and cottage industries and of human resources.

* Growth in the industrial sector (which was later on headed by the Ameer of Jamaat) during the regime of the last Jote Sarker surpassed all previous records.

* In addition, the country witnessed huge economic development, as many development programmes were undertaken and implemented in the agriculture and industrial sectors.

* When the Secretary General of Jamaat was Social Welfare Minister, different programmes of credit, government grant, increased income, training, etc were undertaken for poverty alleviation and human resource development.

* In order to materialise these programmes, budget was increased by 4 times.

* The number of the recipients of the old age benefit was increased from 400,000 to 1700,000, and along with the increase of the allowance the budget was increased by 8 times.

* For rendering proper medical treatment of certain diseases to the poor and the distressed, diabetes hospitals, heart foundations and other medical centres were founded and expanded.

* For the amelioration and welfare of the disabled, short- and long-term programmes were taken in 8 instalments.

* Along with the benefit system and interest-free loan for the disabled, as part the expansion of education for the disabled students, a permanent student stipend programme was established.

* Programmes for ensuring the longevity of the disabled were undertaken, which included the establishment of mineral water production centres and its marketing.

* Production and marketing of plastic materials were expanded.

* In order to expand social welfare activities and to ensure a lasting social safety net, for the first time a national social welfare policy was adapted.

Parliamentary elections 2008

The entire nation hopes to see an elected government through the declared election 2008, which will facilitate a smooth transition of power. Through a free and fair election, the broad march of democracy in the country will be reinstated. In such a political context, this election manifesto has been published to explain Jamaat's noble aim of establishing and promoting a democratic culture in the country, improving the living conditions of the country's vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and finally leading the country to prosperity and national strength.

In the imminent 9th general election, Jamaat will participate as part of the four-party coalition. If the people of the country vote the coalition to power, the programmes that Jamaat will try to materialise as part of the coalition government are stated in this manifesto.

Manifesto 2008

Constitutional and legal reforms

- * The constitution shall be reformed to ensure that the transition of power take place through a peaceful and democratic way.
- * Necessary measures shall be taken to found the constitutional and democratic system on the principle of law and civil rights.
- * All traditional laws shall be reformed and amended to expedite justice.
- * Measures shall be taken to activate the law commission and to make it more effective.
- * The rule of law shall be established to ensure an equal application of law to all citizens.
- * Measures shall be taken to forbid destructive political programmes such as hartal (strike) and obarodh (gherao).
- * To ensure free, fair and impartial elections, the election commission shall be made fully independent; and electoral laws, rules and procedures shall be reformed as required.
- * Special measures shall be taken to settle long-standing lawsuits.
- * Steps shall be taken to appoint competent and honest judges in law courts.
- * In appointing public prosecutors, preference shall be given to qualified and efficient lawyers.

Parliamentary Reforms

- * The rules of procedure, and if needed the constitution, shall be reformed in order to prevent a party or independent lawmaker from making parliamentary sessions ineffective by being absent from the House.
- * All parliamentary standing committees shall be formed in the second session of the parliament, and steps shall be taken to keep them effective.

Administrative Reforms

- * A transparent, efficient, responsible, accountable and service-oriented administrative system shall be introduced, which will be suitable for a free country like Bangladesh.
- * In order to make the administrative system free from corruption, salaries and other financial incentives of the public employees shall be increased.
- * Appointments and promotions of employees and officers shall not be determined by their party affiliations. Merit, competence, quality, character and seniority shall be the yardsticks in such matters.
- * Training institutions shall be made more effective.
- * Attempts shall be made to remove bureaucratic complexities and the patronising attitude of the bureaucrats. In this regard, the bureaucrats shall be given moral training and shall be infused with the love of the country.
- * The culture of looking after the interest of particular groups in administration shall

be strictly controlled.

- * Unnecessary interferences in administration shall be stopped.
- * E-Governance shall be introduced at all levels of administration.

Defence

- * In order to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bangladesh, a timely and strong defence force shall be created with modern military equipment, technology and training. Necessary budgets shall be allocated for this purpose.
- * National security shall be a top priority, and a national defence policy shall be introduced.
- * Defence industry shall be given proper emphasis and shall be encouraged.
- * Steps shall be taken to infuse the defence forces with moral boost to protect the country.
- * Arrangements shall be made to gradually give military training to the citizens of age 20-30 years under the supervision of the defence forces.

Maintaining Law and Order and Curbing Terrorism

- * Life, property and dignity of the people shall be protected.
- * Legal actions shall be taken against all offenders and criminals irrespective of their party affiliations and social and political clout.
- * All criminal activities such as terrorism, violence, money extortion, unlawful killings, robbery, mugging, rape, persecution of women, highway robbery, smuggling, drug trade and trafficking in women and children shall be strictly checked.
- * All possible measures shall be taken to stop harassment of any innocent person in any way.
- * Professional and moral training shall be given to the police, BDR, Ansar and Village Defence Force; and they shall be equipped with proper transport vehicles and equipments. In addition to salary increase, administrative reforms shall be made in this field.
- * Community policing shall be strengthened.
- * In order to combat smuggling, trafficking and similar other border crimes, required border roads shall be made.

Curbing Corruption

- * The Anti-Corruption Commission shall be given all necessary cooperation so that it can work independently to eradicate corruption which is the single most harmful obstacle in the country's way to development and prosperity.
- * A social movement shall be launched against corruption.
- * In addition to measures taken by the ACC against corruption, other tough actions shall be taken against corrupt officials and employees.
- * New laws shall be promulgated against the corrupt people who hold responsible positions, and measures shall be taken to ensure the application of those laws.

Education

- * Education shall be given the highest priority.
- * Gradually steps shall be taken to introduce free education for both girls and boys up to HSC level.
- * Especial emphasis shall be put on female education, and an adequate number of schools, madrassas, colleges and universities shall be established to promote female education.
- * The human resource of the country shall be trained in technical education, vocational training and science and technology in order to make them competent and to facilitate their employment in other countries.
- * The required number of new primary schools, government madrassas, schools, colleges and universities shall be established.
- * Along with the forqania madrassa system, masjid-based community education shall be given an especial priority. And community education shall be started in places of worship of all religions.
- * The alia and quomi streams of education shall be modernised to make them timely and relevant.
- * An especial emphasis shall be laid on adult education.
- * At all levels of education, environment and facilities for information technology, computer science and other modern and advanced knowledge and research shall be established.
- * At all levels, moral and ethical education shall be provided.
- * Bravery and heroism shall be inculcated and recognised, and financial benefit shall be offered for that.
- * At educational institutions, teachers' and students' party politics shall be stopped and necessary reforms of the relevant laws shall be made.

Science, Information and Communication Technology

- * Executive steps shall be taken to materialise the application, research and development of science, information and communication technologies.
- * Economic development shall be brought about by way of generating employment through using those technologies.
- * To ensure good governance, 'electronic governance' shall be introduced.

Radio, Television and Popular Media

- * Through literature, culture and popular media, sound and creative thinking shall be encouraged. National rules and regulations shall be formulated in this regard.
- * In radio and television channels and in other popular media, programmes conducive to the intellectual and human development of the people shall be broadcasted.
- * Radio, television and other government mass media shall be given autonomy to work neutrally.

* The amount of media coverage of the political parties in the public mass media shall be determined by their representation in parliament.

Economics

* Foreign dependency shall be reduced as much as possible, and industries largely based on agricultural goods shall be promoted; and thus a policy of self-sufficiency and self-reliance shall be pursued in all economic sectors.

* In order to increase government revenue, a timely and institutional structure shall be made by reforming the laws of customs and income-tax.

* In order to rescue the people from the exploitation of the interest-based economy, interest rate of the nationalised and private banks shall be gradually reduced and the gap between the interest rates of deposit and loan shall be narrowed.

* The trend of advancement in the areas of business and industry shall be accelerated by providing the unemployed youths with technical training and with long-term, interest-free loan.

* Poverty rate shall be gradually reduced.

* Steps shall be taken to ensure economic development and growth by properly utilizing the country's land, labour, capital, raw materials and natural resources.

* Proper emphasis shall be put on the development of the private sector; and in respect of this, relevant laws and rules and regulations shall be modernised and the government shall offer more generous cooperation.

* All administrative support shall be offered to ensure the proper investment of the foreign remittance sent by the expatriate Bangladeshi workers. In order to strengthen the country's economy, pragmatic economic ties shall be strengthened especially with China, Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, India, Thailand, Pakistan, South Korea, Iran and with other neighbouring and regional countries.

* Keeping the national interest unharmed, attempts shall be made to increase foreign investment. Relevant rules and regulations shall be made timely and the Investment Board shall be made more effective.

* The economic sector shall be made more dynamic and well-structured, and necessary infrastructures in this regard shall be made.

* Participation of the disabled shall be ensured in all economic activities of the country.

* In order to prevent wastage of time and public funds and to accelerate the trends of development, steps shall be taken to change the trend of project-based development activities to programme-based development activities. In order to realise development programmes financed by public funds, instead of drawing up projects, funds shall be allocated to programme-based development activities drawn up by government offices through relevant ministries.

* Zakat money shall be made tax-free.

Controlling Price Hike

* At critical times, required amount of food, energy and fertiliser shall be imported from foreign countries in order to meet the demands of the people. Relevant purchase laws and rules and regulations in this regard shall be amended.

* In order to sell rice at subsidised prices through private dealers, open market

sales (OMS) shall be introduced as required.

* In order to ensure supply of edibles like rice, lentils, soybean oil, powdered milk at subsidised prices, the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) shall be expanded or if needed a new public body shall be established.

* As part of an attempt to keep the price of sugar stable, sugar production, import and marketing shall be brought under the Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation.

Food and Agriculture

* Subsidy in agriculture shall be increased in order to bring about self-sufficiency in food.

* Allocation of budget shall be increased for the invention and application of modern technologies and for successfully running the activities of agricultural research and expansion.

* Agricultural production shall be diversified. Measures shall be taken to broaden the production of crops, poultry, cattle and fish. And steps shall be taken to export these in order to earn foreign currency.

* Subsidy shall be increased in order to make seeds, fertilizer and insecticides easily available to the farmers, and thus to make the country's most important sector – agriculture – profitable.

* Efforts shall be made to make the country self-sufficient in the production of potato, onion, garlic, ginger, vegetables and lentils.

* The agricultural market shall be restructured in order to ensure the reasonable price of the agricultural goods. In addition, a Price Commission shall be formed in order to assess the production and operation costs and thus to determine the equitable price of all crops.

* In order to make the country's agriculture system stable and profitable, loan programmes of development projects shall be brought under the auspices of the banks instead of the NGOs.

* Interest of agricultural credit shall be exempted, and a separate agricultural and rural credit system shall be introduced.

* Subsidy shall be increased to keep TSP, MOP and DAP fertilizers within the purchase capacity of the farmers.

* A land use policy shall be drawn up and implemented to stop agricultural land from being used for industrial and residential purposes.

* Arable land shall be made available to the actual farmers by reforming the land laws.

* Practical steps shall be taken to keep all agricultural land on both the sides of highways in 60-mile radius from Dhaka and agricultural land of other regions of the country free from industrialisation. Entrepreneurs shall be encouraged to use less fertile land for industrial purposes.

* In order to increase the income of the farmers, appropriate measures shall be taken to establish country-wide agriculture-based industrial establishments, to conserve fruits and crops, to use them commercially and to export.

* Depending on the production of agricultural goods, agricultural export processing zones shall be established in different regions of the country. These zones shall be brought under the auspices of agriculture ministry instead of the Bangladesh Export

Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA).

* All possible steps shall be taken to protect all sorts of crops from the attacks of flood, drought, cyclones, tornadoes, mountain torrents and from other natural calamities.

* For economic development, planned scientific methods shall be used for agricultural and social forestation and for increased production of tea, rubber and fruits and vegetables.

* An agriculture wages board shall be set up under the ministry of agriculture to ascertain the minimum wages and economic benefits of the agricultural workers.

* Concerted initiatives shall be taken to unify ministries of agriculture, fisheries and livestock in order to strengthen the agriculture sector and to make the country self-sufficient in food.

* Land record, mutation and other activities shall be modernised in order to tackle the land-grabbing problems.

Industry

* In different regions of the country mills and factories shall be established through government and private enterprises in order to ensure industrial expansion, self-sufficiency in goods and products and to increase the export of manufactured goods.

* A national policy shall be formulated with regard to oil, gas and other mineral resources. Preference shall be given to the exploration and extraction of oil, gas and coal by domestic enterprises. National interest shall be given the highest priority while awarding such contracts to foreign enterprises.

* Necessary steps shall be taken to expand the garment industry, and all mischievous moves to destroy this industry shall be repelled.

* Minimum wages, financial incentives and security of workers in all mills and factories and business firms including garment factories shall be guaranteed.

* Necessary government support shall be provided for the development of small and cottage industries. Steps shall be taken to reform, develop and modernise loom, jute, hide, tea, sugar and salt industries.

* Petrochemical industries, fertilizer industries, cement industries, food and fruit and vegetable processing industries shall be established by using mineral and forest resources.

* Steps shall be taken to keep combined bargaining agents (CBA) from getting involved in economic matters and to watch over them so that they cannot neglect their assigned duties.

* The establishment of more pharmaceutical industries shall be highly encouraged.

Commerce

* Without hampering the development of domestic industries, increased production and export of domestic products, proper export and import policy shall be announced so that the trade imbalance with various countries is decreased.

* As part of the commercial policy of the country, especial emphasis shall be laid on importing the most essential commodities and production materials.

* Along with taking especial steps to export new commodities, regional and international trade especially with the Muslim countries shall be expanded.

- * Trade diplomacy with the Muslim countries shall be given an especial priority.
- * Import of luxurious cars, cosmetics and similar commodities shall be discouraged, and a higher import duty shall be imposed on these products.
- * Dependency on import shall be reduced in order to save foreign currency. To achieve this goal, demand in the domestic market shall be assessed and accordingly industries shall be established to produce the necessities.
- * Import of unnecessary goods shall be reduced. And the domestic capital and industry shall be given enough support as opposed to multinational capital and industry.

Labour and Labour Policy

- * The minimum wage structure and equal pay for men and women for work of equal value shall be introduced.
- * Labourers aged 65 years or over shall be given retirement benefits.
- * Employees shall be given required professional training; compensation shall be given to those who are injured or die at workplace; and the small salaried employees shall be provided with residential facilities and medical services, and their children shall be given free education.
- * Employees shall be given accident benefits.
- * In order to eradicate child labour from the country, underprivileged children shall be given proper education and good health services.
- * Individual, financial and social security of the female employees working for the garment factories shall be guaranteed.
- * Interests of the labourers shall be safeguarded against all conspiracies from within and without the country.
- * Maternity leave of the female job-holders shall be guaranteed.

Transport System

- * All the regions of the country shall be brought under an efficient communication network, and an inter-district, inter-upazila and inter-union road and transport system shall be established. In order to realise this goal, road, highway, railway and bridges of good quality shall be built in a planned way.
- * Effective measures shall be taken to speed up the construction of the Padma Bridge. Gradually bridges shall be built both in Mauwa and Paturia.
- * Effective steps shall be taken to develop and expand the railway system and to make it profitable.
- * The water transport system of the country shall be developed and modernised, and effective measures shall be taken to prevent maritime accidents.
- * The river-ports shall be repaired, maintained and expanded; and thus the existing problems shall be removed.
- * In big cities and in divisional towns, separate transports shall be introduced for women and children passengers.
- * Chittagong and Mongla sea-ports shall be modernised and made commercially profitable, keeping the national interest unharmed.
- * Biman Bangladesh Airlines shall be reorganised and Zia International Airport shall

be modernised and developed into an international standard.

* Underground train and a required number of flyovers shall be built in Dhaka city.

Water, Electricity, Fuel and Other Energies

* Efforts to explore and extract the natural resources of oil and gas shall be reinforced.

* In order to meet the continuous demand, production of more electricity shall be given an especial priority.

* Electricity supply to the rural area shall be ensured within the shortest possible time.

* In order to address the electricity and energy deficit of the country, civil nuclear cooperation shall be sought from friendly countries.

* Effective steps shall be taken to ensure efficient and well-planned utilization of water resources.

* Smooth and well-planned extraction and utilization of natural gas, mineral oil and coal shall be ensured.

* A national coal policy shall be introduced in the best interest of the country.

* Coal instead of gas shall be used to produce electricity so that adequate gas can be made available for its use as raw material for producing urea fertilizer.

* Individual and collective research shall be encouraged for the invention of alternative solar and wind electricity.

* Energy shall be utilised and exported keeping the interest of the next generation and of the nation unharmed.

Society and Religious Life

* Muslim men and women shall be educated in the basic teachings of the Islamic belief system, Islamic rules and regulations and moral teachings. Appropriate measures shall be taken to establish ritual prayers among the Muslims.

* Blasphemy law shall be promulgated to prevent and prosecute anti-religious propaganda and to ban blasphemous remarks in books and in print and electronic media.

* Equal religious rights shall be established for people of all religions.

* Practical measures shall be taken to undertake programmes based on mosque and on other religious places to promote education and culture and to create health and environment awareness.

* Islamic teachings shall be disseminated through radio, television, newspapers and other popular media.

* Measures shall be taken to ensure that people of other religious denominations can perform their religious practices freely.

* Steps shall be taken to prevent sinful and unsocial activities such as drinking and gambling.

* Imams and muezzins of masjids shall be given decent honorarium. Priest and ministers of equal status of other religions shall be given equal amount of honorarium.

Islamic Research and Propagation

- * Short-medium- and long-term projects shall be undertaken and implemented to conduct, publish and disseminate research work on Islam.
- * Islamic propagation activities under the Islamic Foundation shall be reinforced.
- * Dignity and economic incentives of Khateebis of important masjids such as Baitul Mukarram shall be increased.
- * Masjid-based social programmes and libraries shall be established. Imams shall be given proper training so that they can present the correct teachings of Islam in the best possible manner.

Conservation of Environment

- * Necessary steps shall be taken to prevent environmental pollution and to maintain environmental and ecological balance. Public awareness shall be increased in order to maintain ecological diversity.
- * Deforestation shall be strictly controlled. Well-planned forestation shall be encouraged and government funds shall be awarded for that purpose.
- * Participation of poor and unemployed youths in forestation programmes on a partnership basis shall be guaranteed, and the current forestation programmes shall be reinforced.
- * Steps shall be taken to preserve hills and mountains. Unplanned, indiscriminate cutting of hills and mountains by vested interests shall be stopped.

Human Resource Development and Export and Employment Generation

- * In order to develop human resources, timely and moral training programmes shall be made comprehensive.
- * Semi-educated and uneducated youths shall be provided with technical training, and they shall be given bank credit so that they can generate self-employment.
- * Different types of trade and vocational training courses shall be introduced at upazila and union levels.
- * Job opportunities shall be created in abroad for Bangladeshi skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Corruptions and irregularities shall be removed from agencies involved in recruiting workers for foreign countries.
- * The disabled shall be turned into skilled manpower. Comprehensive micro-credit programmes for them shall be launched so that they can become self-reliant.
- * Information technology shall be widely used as a tool for employment generation and for development.
- * Banks shall be encouraged to use part of their investment in self-employment programmes.
- * Tourism industry shall be widely expanded and developed into a means of earning foreign currency. Domestic and foreign tourists shall be attracted to the country's tourist areas; and our history, tradition and cultural distinctiveness shall be

promoted in our tourism industry.

* More emphasis shall be laid on spreading moral and religious teachings among the prison inmates.

Poverty Alleviation and Social Security

* Appropriate measures shall be taken to alleviate poverty through expanding industrial business and agriculture and through providing bank credits. Zakat shall be used as an effective method of maintaining social security and development.

* People of below poverty line shall be included in the work force by providing them with training and economic assistance.

* Special financial packages shall be introduced for the female-headed poor families.

* In order to reach a permanent settlement of the *monga* (extreme poverty) problem in North Bengal, the communication system in the *mongra*-stricken region shall be developed; and the peasants who are dependent on agriculture for subsistence shall be given training and financial aid. Measures shall be taken to diversify agriculture and to ensure guaranteed wage employment.

* Programmes of old-age benefits, freedom fighters' honorariums, disabled benefits and widow benefits shall be further expanded.

Local Government, Decentralisation of Power and Rural Development

* Administration, especially Dhaka-based central administration, shall be reorganised.

* According to the ordinance of the constitution, upazila and union councils shall be developed into strong local administrations.

* Introduction, implementation and management of development programmes shall be entrusted on local government councils.

* For the interest of the rural population, huge infrastructural development shall be undertaken. **Public education, medical services, employment, entertainment and the semi-employed and un-employed work force shall be brought under development programmes. Rural housing and interest-free housing loan programmes shall be introduced (????????????).**

* Rural development institutes shall be strengthened and developed.

Public Health and Medical Services

* A public health policy shall be introduced to ensure the basic right to medical treatment.

* Medical services shall be provided for all the people irrespective of their region, clan or gender.

* In order to realise this goal, combined initiatives by the private and public institutions shall be taken and all kinds of support shall be provided by the government.

* Required workforce and infrastructure shall be created to ensure good quality public health services.

- * All reproductive health programmes and policies shall be brought under one framework and combined programme.
- * Comprehensive programmes shall be taken to supply pure drinking water to the rural and urban population, and in order to prevent environmental pollution good drainage systems shall be introduced.
- * Poor and distressed families shall be locally identified, and accordingly food and nutrition shall be provided for vulnerable children and women.
- * Courses on health education and disease prevention shall be introduced in the curriculum. And effective steps shall be taken to include people of all walks of life in the vaccination programmes and thus to fight against all preventable infectious diseases.
- * Industrialists and entrepreneurs shall be encouraged and assisted in ensuring good medical treatment of the industrial employees.
- * Legal steps shall be taken against the manufacturing of unhealthy, adulterated and poor quality medications.
- * Strict and combined steps shall be taken to eradicate the problems of smoking and drug-addiction.
- * Traditional medical practice shall be developed into a scientific system, and huge programmes of research and development shall be undertaken in this area.
- * Appropriate infrastructure shall be developed to guarantee primary, secondary and tertiary health care facilities.
- * As in the developed countries, steps shall be taken to ensure specialist medical services at upazila level and to further develop the medical services at district level.
- * In the running of medical services programmes, public representatives, private medical practitioners and, if necessary, military medical corps shall be engaged.
- * Proper emphasis shall be put on the increase of budget and infrastructural development of curative health care.
- * Disease prevention shall be given enough importance and disease control programmes shall be introduced through 'Surveillance'.
- * Combined programmes shall be introduced to reduce maternal and child mortality rate.
- * Health and family welfare centres in union councils shall be made the focal points of primary health care.
- * Steps shall be taken to allocate at least 12% of the national budget for the health sector.
- * Medical services shall be made corruption free.
- * Subsidies shall be provided for the treatment of serious diseases and for poor patients.
- * In order to control AIDS and STDs, public awareness shall be created especially through religious leaders. A wide campaign shall be run to infuse people with religious values and to encourage people to lead a temperate life free from licentiousness.
- * 100% sanitation programmes shall be accomplished.

Sports Development

- * For the harmonious development of the body and mind of all citizens, appropriate sports and entertainment facilities shall be built. Stadiums, sports grounds, parks,

children's parks and swimming training centres shall be constructed, and the existing ones shall be modernised and developed.

* To ensure participation in international sports competitions, proper plans and efficient management shall be ensured and proper training shall be provided for the sports people and athletes.

* Appropriate steps shall be taken to develop cricket, football, swimming, shooting, hockey and other sports in the country.

The Rights of the Freedom Fighters and Their Rehabilitation

* Those freedom fighters who have not been rehabilitated yet shall be rehabilitated with honour and dignity.

* Good medical treatment shall be provided for the crippled and sick freedom fighters.

* The Ministry of Liberation War Affairs shall be made more powerful.

* Allowances for the freedom fighters shall be increased and their children shall be given stipends.

* Bangladesh Freedom Fighters Welfare Trust (BFFWT) (Bangladesh Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust) shall be made more effective.

* Freedom fighters shall be included in yearly hajj delegation.

Women's and Children's Rights

* In order to establish women's proper rights and dignity, employment shall be provided for them according to their aptitude and competence. Rape and all other forms of violence against women shall be prevented. In order to protect women's rights, distressed widows and unsheltered women shall be rehabilitated.

* In order to eradicate prostitution, programmes of correction and social rehabilitation shall be expanded.

* In order to protect the rights of children and to implement the UN slogan 'children before all', appropriate steps shall be taken to stop child labour and to rehabilitate the street children.

* Acid throwing, the abominable dowry system and all forms of persecution of women and children shall be strictly contained.

Rights of Non-Muslims

* In terms of civil rights, equal opportunities for people of all religions and ethnicities shall be guaranteed.

* Security of life, property and honour of people of all religions shall be guaranteed. Religious freedom and civil and legal rights of people of all religions shall be protected.

* Full wellbeing and development of the scheduled caste shall be ensured and the distinctiveness of the non-Muslims and indigenous communities shall be maintained. All shall be given equal opportunities in education and employment.

Foreign Policy

- * Foreign policy shall be driven by the motto that reads: friendship with all nations, animosity to none.
- * Foreign policy shall be formulated, and friendship with the neighbouring countries shall be maintained, giving the highest priority to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.
- * Strong representation of the country shall be made to different international organisations.
- * No treaties or strategies harmful to the dignity and interest of the country shall be signed or implemented. All previous treaties that go against the interest of the country shall be reviewed and reformulated in the light of the sovereignty of the country. No country shall be given the privilege to use the land, water, sea frontiers and air routes of Bangladesh for its military needs and against the security of Bangladesh.
- * A strong role shall be played against neo-colonial domination, expansionism and interference in the internal affairs of a country.
- * Along with being vigilant against racism and communal violence, complete support shall be extended to all struggles fought for protecting national distinctiveness and self-determination.
- * Steps shall be taken to strengthen D-8 and SAARC, and practical measures shall be taken to earn the membership of the ASEAN.
- * Effective steps shall be taken to increase economic cooperation among the OIC member states.
- * Alliance with all peace-loving nations of the world shall be strengthened, and especial diplomatic ties shall be maintained with the Muslim countries.

NGO Policy

- * Cooperation shall be offered to normal and constructive activities of all domestic and foreign non-governmental and voluntary organisations that work for the overall socio-economic development of the people.
- * In order to ensure the financial transparency of the NGOs and to supervise their overall activities, the NGO Bureau shall be expanded and strengthened.
- * Security of the NGO workers shall be ensured all over the country.
- * NGO programmes shall be made politics free. Dependence on foreign NGOs shall be reduced.
- * National rules and regulations shall be formulated to oversee NGO activities.

Chittagong Hill Tracts and Minority Ethnicity

- * The territorial integrity of Chittagong Hill Tracts, which is one-third of the sovereign land of the country, shall be protected. Security of life, property and dignity and the cultural distinctiveness of all the inhabitants of the region – indigenous people, Bengali, non-Bengali, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians and people of all religions, colours and ethnicities – shall be protected. Proper constitutional and humanitarian steps shall be taken in order to guarantee the

security of their life and livelihood.

* All sorts of fundamental rights of people of all aboriginal tribes and ethnic minorities living in Chittagong Hill Tracts and in other parts of the country shall be protected.

* Any plot, conspiracy and anti-nation activities against the territorial integrity or political independence of any regions that are strategically and geo-politically important for the country shall be strictly resisted in particular.

Conclusion

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is a modern, democratic and liberal Islamic political party. Maintaining unreserved respect for people's profound interest in democracy, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has been trying to establish liberal parliamentary democracy in this country for a long time. Since its inception, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has been devoted to turning Bangladesh into a developed and stable democratic country.

At present, almost half of the population of the country live below poverty line. Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami deeply believes that, protecting the fundamental rights and meeting the basic needs of the poor and of middle-income people are the first and foremost duty of any democratic government. Holding this sincere belief, if voted to power, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami shall make all-out, comprehensive efforts to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income, welfare state. Especial emphasis shall be laid on the following issues:

* Development and modernisation of the food, agriculture, livestock and fishery sectors to achieve self-sufficiency,

* Strengthening the defence system of the country to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country,

* Reinforcing the programmes of poverty alleviation, education and social security so that the poor and the distressed of the country and their children can become competent citizens,

* Strictly preventing persecution of women and exploitation of children along with rendering government and social services to women and children,

* For continuous economic growth, bringing about dynamism in the following sectors and issues: industry, education, information and communication technology, commerce, communication, rule of law, curbing corruption, electricity, energy, etc.;

* Modernising the labour policy to solve the unemployment problem and to facilitate employment in abroad,

* Along with reinforcing the security of life and property of the non-Muslims, undertaking all forms of welfare and development activities,

* Guaranteeing social security by curbing terrorism, corruption, bribery and other social maladies,

* Guaranteeing the religious rights of the people of all religions and removing all impediments on the way to the propagation and establishment of Islam.

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is determined to turn Bangladesh into a modern, democratic welfare state by undertaking and implementing comprehensive reform

programmes so that the country can become politically, economically, socially and culturally a strong and self-sufficient country and can emerge as a rising power in Southeast Asia.

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Election Manifesto 2008 at a Glance

- Administrative reforms: Good governance shall be established through administrative reforms.
- Defence: A national defence policy shall be introduced and a strong defence force shall be created.
- Law and order: The rule of law shall be established in the country.
- Corruption: Strict measures shall be taken to curb corruption.
- Education: The education sector shall be given the highest importance and party politics shall be stopped at educational institutions.
- Rights of the freedom fighters: Proper dignity and rights of the brave freedom fighters shall be guaranteed.
- Economics: All steps shall be taken to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country within a short period of time.
- Agriculture: Agriculture loan of the farmers shall be exempted and equitable price of their crops shall be ensured.
- Industry: For rapid industrialisation, government aid shall be made easy and available.
- Labour, labour policy and social security: Government grants shall be given to the helpless and the weak, and steps shall be taken to provide interest-free loan, educational opportunities and rehabilitation.
- Women and children: Persecution and exploitation of women and children shall be strictly prevented.
- Rural development: Union and upazila councils shall be turned into the foundation stone of development.
- Non-Muslims: Security of life and property of the non-Muslims shall be maintained and their civil rights shall be guaranteed.
- Religion: Ulama and all religious leaders shall be given proper dignity. And propagation and practice of Islam shall be given all-out cooperation.