

English translation:

The parliament... does not meet for most of the year. It meets four or five times during the year. The budget session is the longest. Then, there are other sessions. Five... they sit five times; six times, even. This is the situation in Bangladesh. Like everything else here, natural calamities are the biggest trouble for us. Every year there are big or small floods here. One of the reasons for the floods is that all around us, especially to the north, the Assam and Arunachal regions of India, are places where the maximum rainfall takes place. All the water of Assam flows through Bangladesh to the Bay of Bengal. So, our rivers are filled with silt from upstream, and their channels cannot cope with the water that flows through them. There is flooding on account of that... on account of overflowing. Flooding has become a regular bane for us. And, every year, there is damage because of the flooding. Lives and crops are destroyed. There is a shortage of food in the country. People pass through difficulties. And the other things that happen here regularly are cyclones.¹ Every year there are one or two terrible cyclones, in which many people get killed, houses are destroyed, and domestic animals are killed. These two things make for disasters in our life as a nation. Since these are natural events, there is not much that we can do about them. If our neighbors – such as India – had acted in a friendly way, and built dams in those regions to stop the water from flowing into our rivers, or had helped us otherwise, then it would have helped. But they don't do this. We are victims of the situation, and would like compensation for having to live through [the resulting difficulties]. And our problems with food at this time are [because] of the large number of people. The population is too high. It's a very densely populated place. The country is small. The total area of the country is 54,000 square miles, or 144,000 square kilometers. About 150... more than 150 million people live here. Producing food for all these people is difficult, but at this moment we are self-sufficient. It's not clear how things will be later on. This is the situation in Bangladesh. We are trying to make things as good as we can. Allah knows how far this effort will bear fruit. I hope that we will do well in the future.

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¹ The term for a tropical storm in the Bay of Bengal.