



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

*Talks + lunch on 18 June
Should be possible. Agree
w/xt of telegram?*

London SW1A 2AH

2 May 1980

Dear Michael,

Andy 2/5

*Yes - but he will
want more aid*

BANGLADESH: VISIT BY PRESIDENT ZIA

The British High Commissioner at Dacca (telegram no 119, enclosed) and the Bangladesh High Commissioner in London have told us that President Zia is keen to pay an official visit in June. This would be a useful opportunity for an exchange of views on Afghanistan and Iran, with a sympathetic and helpful Islamic leader.

President Zia has done much to restore democracy in Bangladesh. He is an honest, likeable and pro-Western leader who is an enthusiastic supporter of the Commonwealth. Under his guidance his country has been playing a useful role in the United Nations (where Bangladesh is currently a member of the Security Council), in the Non-Aligned Movement, and in the Islamic Conference. Bangladesh was active in rallying support amongst the Non-Aligned for condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The President wrote on 14 April to the Iranian President urging the release of the American hostages. A visit would provide us with the opportunity to encourage President Zia to maintain his moderate line on international issues as well as to reassure him of our own (and the West's) continuing interest in Bangladesh's political stability and economic development.

Lord Carrington recommends that President Zia should be invited to visit Britain, as the guest of the Government, from 16-19 June, and that the Prime Minister should hold talks and give a lunch for him. If the Prime Minister agrees to an invitation, we propose to send the attached draft telegram to Sir Michael Scott in Dacca.

If these dates are not convenient, could you suggest alternatives?

I am copying this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*yours ever
Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)

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10 Downing Street

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Department SAD
Drafted by (Block Capitals) W K K White

OUTWARD
TELEGRAM

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[TEXT]

VISIT OF PRESIDENT ZIA

1. Please convey the following invitation from the Prime Minister to President Zia for a visit as a guest of Government from 16-19 June. Detailed arrangements can be made once we have been able to ascertain that the dates proposed are acceptable.
 Begins.

I am pleased to learn that you are thinking of coming to Britain in June. I would like to invite you to visit London as a guest of the British government and suggest that the visit might be from 16 - 19 June. Detailed arrangements can be made with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office through your High Commission in London if these dates are convenient to you.

I much look forward to meeting you again. Ends.

2. Both the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State would be available to see President Zia in this period and we hope to be able to arrange for a call on the Palace.

Copies to:-
 Buckingham Palace
 No 10 Downing Street

