

Religious Fundamentalism and Party Politics in Bangladesh:

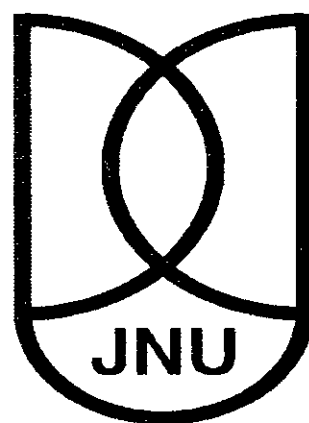
**A Comparative Study of the Communal Mobilization by the Two
Major Political Party Alliances in Bangladesh**

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University

For award of the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

MAITREE DEVI



Centre for Political Studies

School of Social Science II

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

New Delhi 110067

2008



Centre for Political Studies
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
 New Delhi - 110067, India

Tel. : 011-26704413
 Fax : 011-26717603
 Gram : JAYENU

Date: 21/07/08

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled “Religious Fundamentalism and Party Politics in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study of the Communal Mobilization by the Two Major Political Party Alliances in Bangladesh” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of the University or any other university.

Maitree Devi
MAITREE DEVI

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Valerian Rodrigues
Valerian Rodrigues
 Chairperson, Centre for Political Studies

Rakesh Gupta
Prof. Rakesh Gupta
 Supervisor

STAFF ROOM
 Centre for Political Studies
 School of Social Sciences
 Jawaharlal Nehru University
 New Delhi-110067

Maitree Devi
 Maitree Devi
 School of Social Sciences
 Jawaharlal Nehru University
 New Delhi-110067

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to the many people who over the past years or so have given me valuable assistance during the various stages of preparing the present work. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to them.

My heartfelt thanks go to my supervisor, Professor Rakesh Gupta, who is a father figure to me, who enabled me to complete the writing/work. Without his support, guidance and encouragement this study would never be completed. During the period of my research and writing he extended both intellectual and emotional support. He was a constant source of inspiration. His influence on me goes beyond this study and will be more obvious in the days to come.

My mother Runu Das, my local guardian Aditi Ganguli and Amaresh Ganguli, and my uncle Kajal Das, their constant inquiry of my progress, encouragement and advices were towers of strength, wellsprings of comfort. It is because of them I knew what problems I may face in the course of writing the dissertation and hence I could prepare myself to face those situations. Their far sightedness and clarity always amazed me.

I am very appreciative of the research opportunity and support given to me by the Jawaharlal Nehru University of New Delhi, India and the Centre for Political Studies, which enabled me to pursue M.Phil degree.

I could never have undertaken this project/work without the generous assistance of the many librarians and staff at institutions whose holdings provide the thesis's documentary basis. Special thanks go to the JNU Library and the Teen Murti Library, New Delhi, India; the Dhaka University Library and the Public Library, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

My thanks also go to friends and colleagues with whom I privately exchanged views on various themes in this work, and from whom I profited much and those who took the time

to read through drafts of all or parts of the thesis and who made valuable comments and suggestions. These include Soraya Victoria, Bhoomika Meiling, Mustafa Enam, Amit Singh, Antara Mitra, Moses Kharbithai, Kaustubh Deka, Gedeon Shadang, Muanlal Hanshing, Nitin Gupta, Debanjana Ghatak, Aditi Verma, Mahfuz Masum, Shantanu Dey and Nupur Das.

Numerous other friends supported me in nonacademic ways and to them I acknowledge my sincere gratitude.

Finally, I record my thanks to my great and wonderful father late Kali Ranjan Sil who was always supportive and provided me enough love, who introduced me to the political understanding, human ethics, values and principles throughout his life.

For whatever short comings may remain in the study however, I alone bear responsibility.

Contents

Acknowledgements

Preface

i-ii

1. Introduction: Exploring Fundamentalist Outlook- A Critical Analysis 1-25
2. Historical Background of Muslim Politics 26-40
3. The Journey through Pakistan 41-64
4. Bangladesh Polity: Coups and Islam 65-86
5. Regimes and Islamisation 87-110
6. Political Parties, Political Process and Islam 111-154
7. Summary and Conclusion 155-159

Bibliography

160-177

Preface

This thesis is about the role of Islamic fundamentalist parties in political process in Bangladesh. Despite being a richer and more advanced part of Pakistan, in terms of culture and political consciousness, it became a dependent capitalist state, like Pakistan. Its initial secular drive has been nipped in the bud owing to intermittent military coups, remittances from Muslim countries, ensuing corruption, dependence on foreign capital in the name of fighting an external enemy and establishing a Bengali Islamic nationalism, in the wake of the weak left movement which increasingly split.

Chapter one looks at fundamentalism in theory, with reference to Muslim brotherhood and Deoband School, given the historical colonial context.

Chapter two talks about how the two political parties Congress and Muslim League in each and every political context could not be united in terms of issues, interest and organizing a movement against the colonial power, the Muslims started feeling that they are a totally different/distinctive nation from the Hindus, and subsequently which paved the way to the partition of India and the emergence of two different states on the basis of religion.

Chapter three looks at the historical part of Bangladesh being a part of Pakistan and the explanation of its experience of a colony by the West Pakistan, this made the Bengali Muslims conscious about their political rights and secular ethos. Despite the progressive and secular movements like for mother tongue Bengali and an autonomous and independent secular Bangladesh, the Bengali Muslim middle class was always in an identity crisis between Muslim and Bengali, as Pakistan was between Islamist and ethnic identities of Sindhis, Baluches, Panjabis, Pushtos and Mohajirs.

Chapter four looks at the theory of civil military relations in South Asia and Bangladesh and also tries to find out the reasons behind the frequent military interventions in Bangladesh.

Chapter five talks about the Islamisation process in Bangladesh and fundamentalist outlook by the different political parties after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971.

Chapter six looks at the two main political parties BNP, and AL, for their own electoral benefits wooing Jamaat, and the relations with the fundamentalist Islamic parties which led to the further strengthening of fundamentalism in the state, and also the intimidation of minorities in the state.

This is followed by a conclusion and a bibliography.

The thesis is based on secondary Indian and Bangladeshi sources. The latter include reference to original sources in English and Bengali.

Chapter One: Introduction

Exploring Fundamentalist Outlook: A Critical Analysis

What is Fundamentalism?

Fundamentalism is the situation when a person's, organization's or institution's mentality is based on any particular religious community or race and works against or does harm to persons of other religious community/communities¹. Fundamentalism is linked with the idea of community.

It has been thought many times that piety and righteousness are uninterrupted. But if we analyze this thought then we understand that it has its origin firstly in decomposed social thought and secondly in active political sinister motive. And we have had a long tradition of lacking in our perspective a neutrality to see Muslims' and Hindus' social and economical seeking. The faultiness on traditional group identities perpetuated by historical factors; this decomposed thought has formed our mentality in such a way that in the area of politics we do not see the country's citizens as rich-poor, ruler-ruled, oppressor-oppressed human beings but as people belonging to different religious communities. Because of this decomposed mentality our societies have very powerful/severe community-based limited and sectarian consciousness rather than the healthy class consciousness. And that's why our social and political life and thoughts are regressive and backward, despite our liberal protestations and acclamations.

Before Britishers' arrival, only the Hindu and Muslim communities had an unhealthy difference in their consciousness despite their co-mingling. So we can not say this discriminatory/split division had been originated by Britishers only. The Britishers intensified this consciousness, whenever they got the opportunity, for their own imperialist seeking/ necessity and by their active endeavor they transformed the Hindu-Muslim religious and social difference into the political hostility/dispute by the 20th century, especially after the mutiny of 1857.

When Britishers arrived in India, they sowed the seed of communalism as part of their unconscious role of historical advance. Indian society's financial/pecuniary life started

¹ Badruddin Umar. *Fundamentalism*. Muktaadhara. Dhaka. Bangladesh. June, 1980.

getting radically changed. The extensive/pervasive area of life started having competition. This competition due to various reasons brought up dispute, collision and ill-feeling in all aspects of the life of Hindus and Muslims. In this the financial dispute gradually became extensive and ample and by the beginning of the twentieth century this had transformed into severe political dispute. This political dispute gradually intensified and divided the country into two, and even that did not uproot fundamentalism but kept it kindled/flamed in either countries' national life or foreign relations/policy.

Fundamentalism is not just an idea. It means different things to different people, like Hasan al-Banna (1906-49), who founded the al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt; and Deoband School. It is therefore, opportune at this point to look detail tenets of fundamentalism as they have evolved so far.

Tenets of Fundamentalism:

- Fundamentalism, conservative movement in American Protestantism arising out of the millenarian movement of the 19th century and emphasizing as fundamental to Christianity the literal interpretation and absolute inerrancy of the Scriptures. Fundamentalism came into its own in the early 20th century in opposition to modernist tendencies in American religious and secular life. In the late 20th century the movement was represented by numerous church bodies, educational institutions and special-interest organizations. The roots of fundamentalism are found in the history of the American millenarian movement.²
- Generic 'fundamentalism', actual fundamentalist and 'fundamentalist-like' movements come in a confounding variety of shapes, sizes, and types. They are found in different settings. These disparate movements share not only a set of identifiable traits, but certain logic in their unfolding. They follow certain patterns of relating to the world. The pattern followed by a given movement at a

² The New Encyclopedia. Britannica. Vol. 5. founded 1758. 15th Edition. 1993.

given time is determined by a set of factors what can be classified under the rubrics of structure, chance and choice.³

- All fundamentalist intentionally interact with the outside world in some way. Different fundamentalist movements or the same movement at different times in its life, relate to the world according to various patterns or modes of behaviour. Some spread throughout the society gradually; others attempt to overthrow their enemies in a dramatic, concerted campaign; still others may withdraw to the periphery, or decline, or even cease to exist.⁴
- Fundamentalism is defined as essentially reactive, militant, and anti-pluralist; in its complete expression it must therefore seek to suppress alternative visions and movements within a given society or world. All fundamentalists expect the enemy to be abolished, one way or another, sooner or later. According to their perspective, god's world is pure, not pluralist. Thus a means of abolishing the enemy is to reinterpret and influence the structures, institutions, laws and practices of a society, so that opposing fundamentalism may become more difficult, and so that conditions become more favourable for the conversion or marginalization of the enemy.⁵
- The causes of fundamentalism are religious sector and cultural factors such as the educational system, the media, and the condition of the civil society. Social structure and mobility, ethnicity, economic trends and conjuncture, and politics and public policy, international environment-war, imperialism, trade and demonstration effects have direct and dramatic consequences or work indirectly on fundamentalism.
- Religious structure and theology would have a large impact on fundamentalist organization and ideology; war, economic crises, and population movements may have a close relationship to growth and spread. Long term structural factors, such as the organization and theology of the host religion, ethnic and religious heterogeneity, the growth and character of the economy, cultural secularization,

³ Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Sivan and R. Scott Appleby. "Explaining Fundamentalisms". In Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* (Ed.): The University of Chicago Press LTD, Chicago and London. 1995.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

and the domestic and international political situations, must be understood as necessary but not sufficient causes of fundamentalism.⁶

- The ethnic linguistic regional composition of a society-its homogeneity or heterogeneity, the distinctiveness of regional divisions, the historical background of relations among the ethnic and regional groups may have important implications for the development of fundamentalism.
- Recessions, depressions, inflation, strikes, unemployment, and famine may create attitudes and grievances among particular groups in the population, inclining them favourably to fundamentalist arguments, themes, and practices. Contrariwise, the availability of abundant natural resources such as oil may make it possible for some countries to offer opportunities and services to their people and the people from other countries that may obviate or blunt the impact of such economic shocks.⁷
- It cannot be overestimated the importance of western imperialism in the explanation of fundamentalism in the Third World-in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. Commerce and the secular culture of science, technology and modern industry, appeared in the Third World under the auspices of exploitative, colonialist Western powers. And the independent governments established in these formally colonial countries continue to bear these neo-colonialist stigmata, long after the departure of the imperial authorities. Thus Third World fundamentalist movements tend to have nationalist and anti-imperialist tendencies in addition to their religious ones. They tend to be parochial and 'isolationist' in their relations to the outside world.⁸
- Defeat in war or an evident economic failure damages the legitimacy of the political system, and facilitates recruitment to protest movements, including fundamentalism.
- Confronted with the threat of secularization, the world of religion responds adaptively or militantly-by assimilating to the values of the secular world, or by

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

mobilizing, usually in part, in opposition to this invasion and to the traitors who compromise with the enemy.⁹

- The objectives of fundamentalist movements are thus shaped by the basic social structural and historic forces. If there are to be fundamentalist movements, the social templates will define their goals and channel their energies. This is a structural and necessary explanation of fundamentalist movements. But it is not a sufficient explanation.
- Fundamentalism banishes reason from religion and compassion from faith. Its main traits are: revivalism, hostility towards minorities, anti-intellectualism, intolerance, arrogant insularity, intellectual bankruptcy, and moral blindness. They are reflected in a rejection of rational discourse, pluralism, free speech, democratic governance, secularism and in recourse to violence. There is no single model of fundamentalism.¹⁰
- Fundamentalism is a response to the challenges of modernity which were perceived by the zealous as threats to the integrity and survival of their faith. Some of the believers met the challenge by reform and compromise; others by rejection and retreat into revivalism. A section of the revivalists, disdaining retreat, adopted the aggressive stance of fundamentalism in thought and violence in action.¹¹
- Being a reaction to modernity, fundamentalism reared its head first in the United States, the show case of modernity. 'Of the three monotheistic religions, Islam was in fact the last to develop a fundamentalist strain, when modern culture began to take root in the Muslim world in the late 1960s and 1970s.¹²
- Islamisation will mean the destruction of the social space between the state and the family. The Islam that the Islamic Salvation Front is proposing is not a return to Muslim civilization, which had room for music, philosophy, poetry and a certain secularity. What the Islamists advocate is not the return of an incomparably rich classical age, but the establishment of an empty stage on

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ A.G. Noorani, *Islam and Jihad: Prejudice versus Reality*. Zed Books, London and New York, 2002.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

which the believer strives to realize with each gesture the ethical model of Prophet.¹³

- Fundamentalism brooks no compromise and lies discredited. It is exposed thoroughly for its political blunders, moral wrongs and intellectual errors. If malaise is an apt word to describe it, its eradication will not be possible unless the underlying causes are addressed. Like the forms which fundamentalism assumed in various faiths and regions, the causes also varied. In the Muslim world, prime among the causes are denial of democratic rights, political oppression and the sordid and enduring alliance between Western power and corrupt despots.¹⁴

To illustrate these tenets in more concrete historical and geographical location we note the features of the Deobandi School in South Asia.

Deobandi School:

- The *Darul Uloom Deoband* is an Islamic school, where Deobandi Islamic movement was started. The name derives from Deoband, India, where the school Darul Uloom Deoband is situated a town in Uttar Pradesh, India. The Deobandi is a Sunni Sufi Islamic revivalist movement which started in India and has more recently spread to other countries, such as Afghanistan, South Africa and the United Kingdom. Deoband follows the fiqh of Abu Hanifa and Abu Mansur Maturidi's thought in Aqidah and kalam, school of law (Fiqh). It was founded in 1866-67 by several prominent ulema, headed by Al-Imam Mohammad Qasim Nanautawi. The other prominent founding scholars were Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi and Haji Syed Abid Hussain. The institution is highly respected in India

¹³ Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*.

¹⁴ A.G. Noorani, *op. cit*

as it sided with Indian National Congress during the freedom struggle and opposed the partition of India supporting, in turn, United Indian Nationalism.¹⁵

- A group of learned theologians, lead by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi, established the Darul Uloom Seminary in the town of Deoband, north of Delhi. The pedagogical philosophy of Deoband was focused on teaching revealed Islamic sciences, known as *manqulat*, to the Indian Muslim population, following in the Hanafi tradition. In this seminary, Nanautavi instituted modern methods of learning: classrooms, fixed curriculum, learned faculty for different subjects, exam periods, prizes, a publishing press etc. He consciously decided to divorce it from political/governmental participation. He also shunned English-language education. Instead, the faculty instructed its students primarily in Urdu, which was the lingua franca of the urbanised section of the region, and supplemented it with study of Arabic (the repository of Muslim theology) and Persian (the fountainhead of Indian Muslim culture); in due course, it also unwittingly cemented the growing association of the Urdu language with the (north) Indian Muslim community.¹⁶
- Its over 15,000 graduates have gone on to found many similar maddrassas (schools) across South Asia and farther afield; the followers of this school of theology are often described as followers of Deobandi religion.¹⁷
- Deoband's curriculum is based on the 17th-century Indo-Islamic syllabus known as *Dars-e-Nizami*. The core curriculum teaches Islamic law (*shariah*), Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), traditional Islamic spirituality (known as *tasawwuf*, which is the practice of Sufism), as well as several other fields of Islamic study. The current syllabus consists of four stages. The first three stages can be completed in a total of eight years. The final stage is a post-graduate stage where students

¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darul_Uloom_Deoband And also see Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi. India, 2005.

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ *Ibid*

specialize in a number of advanced topics, such as the sciences of Hadeeth, Fiqh etc.¹⁸

- The original institution went through turmoil on the day of its centennial celebrations in 1977 and two independent Darul Uloom came into existence ultimately; both follow the same school of theology, but have different patterns of management. The original premises were taken over by the followers of Asad Madani, whose son still runs it today. A new institution was built by the original founder's great grandson, Muhammad Saalim Qasmi, on the outskirts of Deoband, with the same name, but with the word "Waqf" ("social trust" in English) added to it, which makes its management accountable to an over view by the Muslim community, as per its proponents. Madani's taken over institute has virtually become a private university, according to its critics.¹⁹
- Darul Uloom has been consistently against all forms of terrorism. Alarmed by certain insinuations, recently in Delhi they issued a fatwa against terrorism; its text was also made available in English and Hindi.²⁰
- Deobandi thought has five main principles, which are- Tawhid: Abrahamic Monotheism (of God); no one shares His attributes; Sunnah: Following the methodology of Muhammad; Hubbus-Sahaba: Following the methodology of companions of Muhammad; Taqlid wal-Ittibā: Giving preference to the jurisprudence of one of the earliest jurists of Islam over that of later jurists; Jihād fī Sabīlil-Lāh: Doing Jihad(Striving for the good, in the name of God)²¹
- The Deobandi movement developed as a reaction to the British colonialism in India, which was believed by Muslim theologians to be corrupting Islam. Fearing its consequences, a group of Indian Hanafi Islamic scholars (Ulama) led by Qasim Nanotwi founded an Islamic seminary known as *Darul Uloom Deoband*. It is here that the Islamic revivalist and anti-British ideology of the Deobandis began to

¹⁸ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deobandi>

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid

develop. Gradually, through organisations such as Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and Tablighi Jamaat, their influence began to spread, and hundreds of schools and Darul Uloom affiliated with Deoband sprouted. Notable Hanafi seminaries of Deobandi School include: Nadwatul-Ulama in Lucknow, India and Darul Uloom Karachi, Karachi, Pakistan.²²

- Deobandi Islam: The northern Indian Deobandi school argues that the reason Islamic societies have fallen behind the West in all spheres of endeavour is because they have been seduced by the amoral and material accoutrements of Westernization, and have deviated from the original pristine teachings of the Prophet.²³
- For the last 200 years, Sunnis often have looked to the example of the Deoband madrassa (religious school) near Delhi, India. The Deoband School has long sought to purify Islam by discarding supposedly un-Islamic accretions to the faith and reemphasizing the models established in the Koran and the customary practices of the Prophet Mohammed. Additionally, Deobandi scholars often have opposed what they perceive as Western influences.
- The Deobandi sect originated in the Sunni community, but is not strictly Sunnis. The tack of Darul Uloom Deoband is in accordance with the Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah, Hanafiate practical method (Mazhab) and the disposition (Mashrab).²⁴
- The Deobandi interpretation holds that a Muslim's first loyalty is to his religion and only then to the country of which he is a citizen or a resident; secondly, that Muslims recognise only the religious frontiers of their Ummah and not the national frontiers; thirdly, that they have a sacred right and obligation to go to any country to wage jihad to protect the Muslims of that country.²⁵
- According to some scholar, although the majority of the Islamic population (Sunni) in Afghanistan and Pakistan, belong to the Hanafi sect, the theologians

²² Ibid

²³ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-deobandi.htm>

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid

who have pushed Pakistan towards Islamic Radicalism for decades, as well as the ones who were the founders of the Taliban, espoused Wahabi rhetoric and ideals. This sect took its inspiration from Saudi Hanbali theologians who immigrated there in the 18th century, to help their Indian Muslim brothers with Hanbali theological inspiration against the British colonialists. Propelled by oil-generated wealth, the Wahhabi worldview increasingly co-opted the Deobandi movement in South Asia.²⁶

Fundamentalism and religion-based state

With the emergence of middle class and nationalism, the emergence of religion neutrality/secularism have direct link in many countries history (the history of Europe) but in the history of Pak-Indian middle class and nationalism, there is an infringement. Why this infringement took place is an important question. The Pak-Indian national movement against imperialism was extensively and vastly, influenced and regulated/controlled by religion. The main reason for the attachment towards religion of the Indian Hindu-Muslims, especially Muslim middle class is that religion has been transformed in special glory to a certain/ensured weapon of the middle class in Indian movement²⁷. In the second half of nineteenth century and the beginning of twentieth century the reason for intensified affection in Indian Hindu-Muslims towards religion is not spiritualism/metaphysical but the source is the larger Indian financial and political arena of life, in terms of opportunities of education and employment.

In the beginning of nineteenth century, the European erudite/scholars' extensive exercise of Indian scriptures, treatise and commencement of capitalism in India raised/elevated ancient tradition in the minds of one small middle class and side by side the profound attachment and fidelity towards the eternal religion; on the other hand a robust section formed into European liberal tradition. And there was an influential middle class between

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Badruddin Umar. *Fundamentalism. op. cit.*

these two sections who basically tried to reform religion without abandoning it. Thus the middle class itself was split.²⁸

The Hindu's did not differentiate the affection for mother-land and the affection for their religion. But sections of Muslims differentiated these two extensively, and the intensity towards the affection for their religion was far greater than that for their country as their mother-land. Being the inhabitants of India they refused the larger traditions of India and tried to find their tradition into the traditions of Arab, Persia and Turkey or larger Muslim community. Because of the impact of religion the Indian Hindu-Muslims could not unite in the same traditional pride, and that's why before the exact rise of national movement only, the middle class society had a demarcated area of fundamentalism.

And the Britishers did not ignore the conflicts between the middle class of Hindus and Muslims, to intensify the disputes for their own self-seeking and to root imperialist ruling. The national movement got intensified but it did not move forward in healthy way. The reason was class based weakness of the middle class. The Muslim middle class, to protect their seeking as a weak competitor became in an extensive way the religious-protégé. Any national upsurge was followed by communal riots or divisions.

In the structure of the larger national movement, the Indian peasant-workers and poor class had no similarity, unity, harmony/consistency in concurrence with the middle class. But even without the harmony, Indian peasants-workers joined the national movement against imperialism. The lower strata's acknowledgement of the middle class' leadership was caused due to their ignorance towards the real character of the class interest of the middle class.

Cultural Fundamentalism

One's own Culture is one way of one's protecting/leading life. Culture can be understood through a person's livelihood, food habit, and behavior, expressions of emotions like

²⁸ B.B Misra, *Indian Middle Classes*. London, 1961.

mourning, happiness, sorrow; education, literature, language and the activities of day and night. A person's whole, complete culture gets controlled by various reasons which reason affects more or less that depends on variations of a person's dependence on different things. Economy can be one of the reasons what affects a person's culture, because organized industrial life is also considered to be culture and part of modernity.²⁹

We have noticed the difference in different writers, litterateurs thought and study in different areas because of the social change. In the literature-culture, fundamentalism unfolded/originated because of the origination and the establishment of fundamentalism in the body of society. Each and everything whatever was present in society, got reflected through culture. Every person, writer, litterateur could not go above from that poisonous impact like some of them.

By the end of the 19th century and starting of the 20th century in the literature the impact of fundamentalism was extensive because of the gradual increase of the impact of fundamentalism in the economic, political, social and cultural sector. For the daily life style and life pattern, in practicing culture the actions-reactions and the transition/infusion of feelings gets reflected in language and literature; that's why language and the literature is a measuring rod to discern/ determine the quality of the culture of a society. The complete culture, literature or language of a society is basically an assembled association and united attempt of thousands and thousands people and that's why there is no scope to call or point out a culture, literature as 'yours' or 'mine'. When culture is exclusivist, it breeds dispute, conflict and violence.³⁰

Penetration of fundamentalism through culture, history and literature

The Hindu fundamentalists try to build a picture of the ancient time as the ideal Hindu society and accuse Muslims arrival for the India's misfortune. On the other side, in the same way Muslim fundamentalists try to find out the source/fountain of their glorious

²⁹ Badruddin Umar. *Cultural Fundamentalism*. Muktaadhara. Dhaka, Bangladesh. October, 1980.

³⁰ Ibid

past and also try to prove the methods of disintegration in the starting of the medieval period (eleventh or thirteenth decades). They interpret medieval history through their own prisms.

Previously the historians own view was important because their construction of history was basically a formation/compiling the history on the basis of sequence of events without putting the effort to explain. The historians used to pick the particular events by their own choice and the trend of choosing the events among all the events proves their particular bias and prejudices. If we want to understand the problem of fundamentalism in the construction of ancient Indian history first we have to examine the affect of the contemporary thought process in the composition of history of the last decades.

There are three main schools of theory/doctrine/tenet from the period of 18th century to 20th century. From 18th century only the ancient Indian cultural study and modern essay have started taking place through the ancient Indian history. The three main schools in the historians are-the Orientalists, the Liberal Humanists and the Nationalists.³¹

The Orientalists became the proper devotees of the Aryan culture of ancient India, they started propagating that, in the ancient India there was a basic idealist social system. Their preaching of the pride of the Aryan culture became synonymous to the conservative Hindu school who believe in the nobility/sublimity of the Ved and Vedic literature. In the twentieth centuries religious and social reformation movements started giving currency to the principles of Vedic culture as the base of Indian tradition.³²

The Orientalists started embracing more and more ancient Indian culture, when the Liberal Humanists group started projecting that the arrival of the Britishers, their rule and laws paved the way to India's development and political consciousness. Out of the Liberal Humanists, James Mill had more impact on the thought process of Indian history. The main purport side of the "British-Indian history" is that, it introduced/prefaced the fundamentalists' explanation and also provided the historic support to the 'two nation's

³¹ Romila Thapar, Harbans Mukhia, Bipin Chandra, *Communalism and the Writing of Indian History*. K.P. Bagchi and Company. Calcutta.1989.

³² Ibid

theory'. James Mill is the first historian to divide the Indian history into three parts, they are-Hindu civilization, Muslim civilization and British civilization. It is interesting to note that the third one is not the Christian civilization but British civilization. Mill also criticized Hindu culture as backward and against/ hindrance to the progress/advancement and reason.³³

In the starting of the twentieth century, the Indian historians got affected by the nationalist's movement. And these historians became dependent on the essays of Orientalists and the trend of praising the ancient India what has been called 'Hindu India'. This resulted into establishing a base for the nationalist's curiosity towards rediscovering India's past and also supplying the weapon in the hands of blind priest of the past by supporting the Indian Hindu culture.³⁴ In the nineteenth century it was useful for colonialists and later nationalists, with their own emphases, to write a history of difference, a pragmatic benefit that continues for religious nationalists today.³⁵ The reaction towards the glorification of nobility of the past is basically the reluctance to acknowledge the existence of any conflict, dispute/hostility in the first era of Indian society especially in the social, economic and religious front.

The main weakness/lacking of the Nationalists historians is basically that they did not question the division of the Indian history in three parts by James Mill, the main reason for that is they plunged themselves into the study of politics and history of race/posterity/pedigree of the monarch's without looking into the history of social and economic front. It had been assumed that 'Muslim era' is basically an era of degradation and also thought that, their weaknesses are the main reason for the establishment of British-rule in India. It also had been said that, in the Muslim era, Hindu and Muslims two different nations had been originated what resulted in the division of the whole country into two different states possessed by Hindu and Muslims. It has not been

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Peter Heehs, *Nationalism, Terrorism, Communalism: Essays in Modern Indian History*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 1998.

³⁵ Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 2004.

reckoned that, religious community and nation are not synonymous. In the decades of 1930 to 1940 due to the reason of the fundamentalist's strategy, this particular explanation and separation, disputes became more and more violent and intense.

Many Indian nationalist leaders found it useful, specially to accept the notion of an Indian Golden Age that ended with the presumed oppression of Muslim rule. This explained the British takeover and the need for regeneration. Such a story enhanced cultural self-pride since there had been, after all, a Golden Age, and its existence offered hope for the future. Like the colonialist history, it revolved around self-conscious communities of 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' as 'the master cleavage', in *Susanne Rudolph's* term, at the heart of contemporary history and politics.³⁶

It has been propagated that, before Christ 1000 year to 1200 Christian era, is basically Hindu era because of the ruling family of the whole subcontinent were the followers of Hindu religion. But it is not correct to think this era as an Hindu era on the basis of the history of the Monarch's family/race because Maurya, Indi-Greecian, Shak, Kushan etc many great monarch races were non-Hindus.³⁷

If we try to find out the origin of the word 'Hindu', we found that the Arabs and afterwards others started using the word 'Hindu' because the people who used to stay in 'Hind' (India), they had been called Hindu by these people. It was basically a foreign word what afterwards Hindus had adopted it. Hindus in today's context and meaning, unfold/budding took place in the fifth Christian era, after Gupta period.

Today when we write on ancient history we call Arabs, Turks and Persians together as Muslims but in thirteenth century, the political technical terminology had been used to describe them instead of the religious technical terminology. For example, the Turks had been described as 'Turkeys' the Arabs as 'Yavana' ('Ionian'), used since the time of Alexander the Great³⁸. The Arabs conquered Sindh and establish their rule in Eighth decades. In eleventh decades Turks possessed one side of Punjab and in thirteenth

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Ramila Thapar, Harbansha Mukhia. Bipin Chandra. *op. cit.*

³⁸ Barbara D. Metcalf. *op. cit*

decades the larger area of North India came under their domination. In South, the first Muslim monarch race had been established in the decades of the 14th Century. The far of South came under their rule after a long period. So that's why there is not one special date or period what can be mentioned as the period of establishing Muslim rule, such a use of the term implicitly evokes essentialized religion. The composition of the history had a great impact on the fundamentalist feelings and political believes of common people, it is also a study of the susceptible mind. The fundamentalist's viewpoint does not always appear as conscious adverse/unfavorable approach against a particular community or religion; it is more dangerous/ harmful when the historical study/essay got based on the fundamentalist or nearly fundamentalist conception. The main objective behind the glorification of the Aryan culture is basically indulging an unsubstantial national egotism/vanity. The people who think about the Aryan culture as the root of Indian civilization, they also try to establish the fact that, the culture is very much indigenous. It is undoubtful that it is very difficult for them to acknowledge the fact that, Vedic civilization was not completely/primarily Indian. The greater number/amount of praising the Aryan culture resulted in the same amount of increasing the strength/force of the Hindu explanation of the Indian history.

There is one concept having an established belief about Indian culture that it is based on spiritualism. The people who basically established the fact assumed that, Indians were always plunged in spiritualism and metaphysical thought of philosophy and their perception towards the daily earthy matters made those insignificant. This is a recent concept, because the writers of 19th century only introduced the concept. Non-violence, tolerance became another part of the spiritualism based Indian culture. It became more prominent when Gandhi started projecting the principles of non-violence in the national movement. It should be noted that, India does not have the monopoly in the concept of non-violence and the ideas of it.

The demolition of the temples by the Muslim rulers had been projected in a fundamentalist context. outlook. It always had been projected that, a Muslim ruler demolishes the Hindu temples because he is a Muslim and Islam is against the idolatry.

But there are Hindu rulers too who demolished and looted temples.³⁹ For example, King Harsh in Kashmir who used to demolish, loot temples to collect money and used that money for other purposes. But by some historians the demolition, looting of temples by a Hindu king was not always referred but the Muslim rulers demolishing temples was.

The same goes to the concept of the pressurizing the Hindus (a particular group or a person) to convert into Islam by the Muslim rulers and also about the imposition of 'Jijia Tax' on Hindus. It is interesting to note that, common Muslim people had to clear the 'Jakat tax' too. Hindus later practiced 'Shuddhi'.

The division of Indian history in three parts by James mill is highly problematic. For example, when we got some information through a special source we sometimes do not combine/assemble the information's with the social perspective; we do not examine that information is a reflection of the complete/whole society or a particular group. First of all, the king's life, monarch family/clan, the history of ruling groups had been seen as India's history and the personal religion of the king had seen as the main thing. Secondly, from Arab till Indian subcontinent, the history of more than thousand years had assumed totally unchangeable. The change through place and time in many centuries had been ignored. It should be noted that, the religion of Islam carried different meanings to different people. Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughlak, Akbar and Aurangzeb, Ulema tan and Sufi saints, everyone was Muslim, but everyone had different explanations about Islam. In the history of ancient India historians of that time reflected the internal conflicts and alliance/friendship between the ruling classes in their essays. There were divisions among Shaivites and Vaishnavites or Buddhism and Jainism as revolts against Hindu way of life and philosophy. The historians during the period of the ruling clan/family used to put their own opinion more than the information's of their time in their essays.

The conversion to Islam took place that's for sure. But for the common people in Bengal and the Punjab, both deliberate/willful conversion or the result of the popularity of the

³⁹ Ibid

Sufi Saints.⁴⁰ But as soon as the conversion (willful or pressurized) the new/recent Muslims could not be a part of the ruling upper class Muslims. Basically the higher section/stratum of the Muslims in all possible ways hated the lower class Muslims. Neither the pull of presumed egalitarianism nor the push of 'the sword'-the usual stereotypical explanations of conversion to Islam in South Asia-produced the new networks of patronage and loyalty, perhaps devotion, that we speak of as 'conversion'. Indeed, a Muslim allegiance was not dramatically visible. Only with the first British census in 1871 it had been discovered that the majority of the Bengal population was Muslim; up until then numbers did not matter, the concept of 'majority' meant nothing, and no value was placed on those of some shared identity over a large area. Islam especially when reduced to a narrow list of 'beliefs' can not be used to explain everything. A stereotypical Islam offers us little guidance to understanding the nature of Muslim Politics or the dynamics of their societies, including even the process usually labeled 'conversion'.⁴¹ The term conversion is perhaps misleading, since it ordinarily connotes a sudden and total transformation in which a prior religious identity is wholly rejected and replaced by a new one. In Bengal, as in South Asian history generally, the process of Islamisation as a social phenomenon proceeded so gradually as to be nearly imperceptible.⁴²

In the last 100 years, the teaching of history in India more or less responsible for the spread the fundamentalism among other things. The fundamentalist outlook/viewpoint of the historians helped the fundamentalist ideology/ doctrine to grow. Some scholars had understood Bengali folk religion generally, in terms of a synthesis of Islam and Hinduism. But such thinking simply projects back into the pre-modern period notions of religion that became widespread in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and that postulated the more or less timeless existence of two separate and self-contained communities in Bengal, adhering to two separate and self-contained religious systems,

⁴⁰ Ibid And also see P. Hardy, "Modern European and Muslim Explanations of Conversion to Islam in South Asia: A Preliminary Survey of the Literature", In N. Levtzion. *Conversion to Islam*. New York, 1979.

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Richard M. Eaton. *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier 1204-1760*. Oxford University Press. New Delhi, India, 2006

‘Hinduism’ and ‘Islam’. Reinforcing this understanding was the objective polarization of colonial Bengali society into politically conscious groups drawn along communal lines. Even contemporary Europeans saw Bengali society through binary lenses instead of a single undifferentiated mass of Bengali villagers who, in their ongoing struggle with life’s usual tribulations, unsystematically picked and chose from an array of reputed instruments-in order to tap superhuman power, and they were neither products of Hindu or Muslim culture, but of a single Bengali folk culture or religion. Bengali civilization initially involved the association or identification of Islamic with Bengali superhuman beings. But when figures like Adam, Eve and Abraham became identified with central leitmotifs of Bengali history and civilization, Islam had become established as profoundly and authentically Bengali.⁴³

It has been said that, nationalism and fundamentalism are basically the result of the same modern process after the 18th century. This process was a unity of the whole country’s gradually developed economy, politics and administration process. So for that cause the allegiance/fidelity and other additional points needed to be more widespread/ extensive. The base of the political life needed to be more concord/unite methods. Both of the viewpoints tried to communicate with the past to get an approval from the outlook, doctrine, the movement and the history of the past.

The nationalism is completely a new organizational strategy and theory. The nationalist leaders in the starting for example-Surendranath Banerjee, Lokmanya Tilak believed that and used to think Indian subcontinent as a nation. Their use of religious symbolism gave rise to a nationalism based on religious identities. But the nationalist viewpoint, theory could not admit into deeply and that’s why fundamentalism emerged as prominent. And when the nationalist viewpoint could not deeply admit into the social, cultural and also newly raised political life, it started inviting the previously introduced notion about different nations in the social stratum and the disintegration strategy. The new search for unity through religion, race, ethnicity, language, regional identity and everything paved the way to the disintegration process. Aurobindo’s universal religion subordinates Islam,

⁴³ Ibid

Christianity and so on to its Vedantic core. There is no doubt that he considered Vedantic Hinduism superior to all other religions He connected nationalism with the revival of Hinduism.⁴⁴

TH-15328

The historians projected Hindu and Muslim as two different independent/separate entities when they talked about the two communities in their essays. And this way they brought the backdrop to the 'two nation's theory' into existence in the medieval and modern Indian history and also prefaced the fundamentalist outlook in Indian politics and society. The strong nationalists and the people who were active to try to build a national integration, most of them had been influenced by fundamentalism deeply but it was unknown to them. This is basically a result of fundamentalist viewpoint towards history, society and culture what we had brought up with since our childhood. Because of the lack in the scientific nationalist outlook the invitation to the common people by the nationalists to stand against fundamentalism could not affect people much. The appeal to stand against fundamentalist consciousness failed because of the influential role of the religion in daily life; people took fundamentalism very relevant. The leadership, educational institutions, the all mediums of public communication and media, political parties could not publicize, give currency to the modern scientific thought, concept and consciousness about nationalism in the common people. So the task of influencing/awakening people in the new consciousness of modern nationalism many nationalist leaders adopted an easy way that invitation towards religious consciousness what resulted in weakening the nationalist consciousness and also their writings, thought became faulty with fundamentalism. The religious nationalists believed the religious approach was necessary in India because of the distinctive, spiritual nature of the Indian people and nation.⁴⁵

For example, the role of Lokmanya Tilak, the revolutionaries in the starting point, Arabinda Ghosh and partly Gandhi for his 'Rama Rajya' and also his strategy towards Khilafat. All these caused loss to the national integration because the national movement

⁴⁴ Peter Heehs, *op. cit*

⁴⁵ Ibid

what based on Hindu scripture treatise and its religious rituals, portraits (Hindu tinge) in the perceptions of the Muslims.⁴⁶ If Mother India an allegory of the repudiation of Muslim difference and of becoming a Hindu, then a Muslim can not make himself a part of that iconic position of that maternal figure.⁴⁷ The cultural hegemony aimed at by Bengali religious nationalism was in part an attempt to provide a form of human community greater than of the mechanically successful but spiritually impoverished cultures of Europe.

The characteristic weakness of the Indian bourgeoisie was dependency on Britishers for their business-trade and services, and because of their dependency they could not build a comprehensive revolutionary perspective towards the national movement.

Some of the Indian historians could not talk straight against the colonial rulers because most of them were employed in government or government controlled institutions/agency. They also could not be at rulers beck and call, could not do the sycophancy of the Britishers. So without offending the government they projected a nationalism thought which is basically based on disintegration/separation strategy. This projection of nationalism by the historians and the leaders can be explained as 'indirect nationalism' because they used to call themselves nationalist without standing against the foreign rule, in a revolutionary way. They ran a freedom movement and not a liberation movement according to some Marxist scholars.

By the historians there was an attempt to make some national superman figure for example, Rana Pratap, Gurugovinda Singh and Shivaji through different public communication mediums. In this case it is very interesting to note that, some particular character had been chosen and not Bahadur Shah, Rani of Jhansi, Tatia Topi, the Santal leaders and the leaders of the 'Nil Bidroho' (movement against Indigo plantation), Khudiram Bose, Kalpana Datta etc. The Britishers did not have any problem when the leaders were extolling Shivaji (who was basically against Muslims). The colonial rulers

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Barbara D. Metcalf. *op. cit*

started having problems and intervened when they realized that through Shivaji, Tilak's ideas were publicizing the attitude/predisposition against Britishers.

Before the 'two nation's theory' came up, there was another theory had been projected/built by them and it was 'one nation theory' where Indian people meant as only Hindu and Muslim rule was projected as a foreign rule what made the Muslims in India basically outsiders and foreigners.

It is not necessary that a person who is a fundamentalist or believes in fundamentalism, his so called obedience towards religion had to be built on religious allegiance. But it is undeniable that he needs religion. To a fundamentalist, religion is not the way/method to live a life, but a weapon for a small temporal/mundane to attain one's own interest.

In the Indian subcontinent, Muslim fundamentalism started getting its present shape/figure from 1870, after the establishment of Deoband and Aligarh Muslim education. Both of the institutions were not having the same objectives. In Deoband the system of the education was customary and not modern. Some long century before in different places of Middle East it got inaugurated, especially on the basis of the education system of Al-Azhar University. Deoband's educational structure had established/constructed where religious education got more importance. Deoband was more like a conservative religious educational institution. The Aligarh College and University were not having any consistency with Deoband. Sir Syad Ahmed and other who were linked with the institution wanted to make the institution appropriate/suitable for modern education. The founders of the university were influenced/ inspired by the new education system in 19th century's British India, what introduced for a new economic and social needs.⁴⁸ The education system was more scientific and modern than pure religious education. Sir Syed Ahmed wanted to end the misery/distress of the temporal/mundane life of the Muslims and that was the main aim of his total educational thought process. For a long time he could not protect the secular character of his thought.

⁴⁸ David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Solidarity in British India*. Princeton University Press, Princeton. 1978.

Immediately in 1880's owing to the demand of economic and political life, his secular thought broke down. In the economic life the conflict started between Hindu and Muslims in share-apportionment and through that the fundamentalist politics came into being. As the Muslims took to western education-some fifty years after the Hindus-their assessment of India's past and present differed considerably from those of the Hindus. The Muslims offered a different interpretation, looked for what they considered to be their separate tradition and demanded their share of government jobs.⁴⁹

In Bangladesh and other places the Muslims started adopting the modern western education in the educational institutions like Aligarh. This new demand towards the modern education system came into being completely to build the new economic and social life. This resulted in the establishment of Muslim League as the representative of the Muslims in the political arena. The particular need what had been felt towards the establishment of the Muslim League. Deoband's political institution 'Jamaat-e-Olama-e-Hind, that's why secular and also the institution had very close relation with the Indian nationalist movement. Through the fundamentalist politics so called Muslim culture emerged as the weapon/key to the establishment of the middle class's interest. This particular Muslim culture was not the Muslim culture of the Deoband's. This so called Muslim culture had not that much theological linkage.

Religiously East Pakistani Muslims, especially the feudal and middle class Muslims never thought Indian subcontinent and Bangladesh before as their home land. The feudal Muslim class, in the Mughal reign/kingdom and also till the British rule used to talk in Farsi-Urdu and used to think them nation-wise as Arab, Iranians, Turk, Khurasani or Samarkandi. The affect/impact of the foreign language, blood and religion in the demand of the feudal and upper middle class interest became powerful and prevented the self-soul relationship with the soil of their own country. The cultural consciousness also could not be unfolded perfectly. The cultural productiveness also got prevented in various ways,

⁴⁹ M.Anisuzzaman, "The Identity Question and Politics." In Rounaq Jahan, *Bangladesh Promise and Performance*. (Ed). Zed Books LTD. London and New York and The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

because the attempt/effort to create a culture without having a heartfelt relationship with the country and soil made the culture basically utopian, unreal and sterile.

To describe 'two nation's theory' Quaid E. Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not differentiate between the community and nation. To prove the fact that Indian Hindu and Muslims are two different nations he prefaced every logic in the Indian social, economic, political and cultural life in favor of his theory. The Muslim League leaders publicized extensively that the culture of the Muslims are different than the culture of the other Indian religious communities especially Hindus. The main objective of this publicity was to prove and establish that the culture of different communities of India are not based on common language, homeland, state life, literature, song, economic life etc but completely on religion. Their claim basically portrayed every community's cultural life is detached from another like an island and no common stream/flow of culture and traditions with the other communities in the larger Indian life. In the political arena of the life of the Muslims, religion and politics could not be separated gradually. On top of it, political thought process built up collectively with the resorting to religion. The main reason for this is that, nationalism cohabitated with fundamentalism in the Indian politics. In the context of the reform movements and revivalist response, for example, the Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj movements, respectively Congress movement for greater jobs and representation in councils took off in 1885, the Muslims in the end of 19th century and in the 20th century took to Islam and Muslim interest, despite Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's not so Islamic positions. He wanted to import education to Muslims so that they could like the Hindus find employment and to cease to be backward. In the collective Indian life, not only for the religious reason but also economic, political and social reasons the consciousness and well being thought of the common Hindu-Muslims came under the crucial danger of fundamentalism and got paralyzed.

Chapter Two

Historical Background of Muslim Politics

Partition of Bengal

Why the Partition of Bengal was needed? The 'partition of Bengal' has been called as 'communalist partition of Bengal' by *Cantwell Smith*. Before the starting of nineteenth century, in British India the Bengali Hindus became educated in the western education, and received the western principles, values of life style what made them socially far ahead of Bengali Muslim. In Bengal, there were 24, 75,000 educated Hindus out of 2,9,00,000 Hindu population, which is basically 11.9 percent. Out of that population 10, 83,000 means 1.8 percent were western educated. On the other hand, only 10 lakhs Muslims were educated out of 2, 42, 00,000 populations, that means only 4 percent. And only 62 thousands of them were western educated, 0.25 percent. In the education sector especially in the western education, this unequal development appeared as extensive discrimination between Hindu and Muslim in the field of official employment service and profession. In 1900, there were 392 higher governmental posts where the Muslims were occupying only 62 posts in spite of having the backing from Britishers. And out of that number most of them were non-Bengali.¹

At the footsteps of western education and civilization, the Hindus were going ahead towards social progress and on the other hand the Muslims were getting backwards for being against/their opposition towards the western education. Without eradicating the cultural difference between Hindu and Muslim, the conflicts were inevitable between the two communities, which was becoming a hindrance towards a proper and united state system, especially the areas of the eastern side of the country had been felt the intensity of the atmosphere. Lord Curzon made the arrangement to divide the Bengal province into two parts. During that time, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were in a single province. He made two provinces out of West Bengal and East Bengal with some parts of Assam and this way he paved the way for fuller development in the field of education, culture in the different areas of Muslim majority based East Bengal.²

¹ Golam Murshid, *East Bengal in the Rabindra World -The Rabindra Practice in East Bengal*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *Communalism and Minority Crisis*. Jatiya Sahitya Prakash, Dhaka. Bangladesh. February, 2007.

² Bimalanda Shasmal, *How India was partitioned*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

The majority of the population that is Muslim was socially backward community in the entire Bengal and that's why the conscious middle class had not emerged in the practical sense. That's why it was impossible for them to compete with Calcutta based Hindu middle class for the economic power. So the 'Partition of Bengal' and establishing new capital in Dhaka the Muslim Community was benefited completely. But the Hindus did not accept the partition. The absentee Zamindars who were living in Calcutta realized, their part of Zamindari is going to become a part of another province. The businessman and industrialists also realized that if businesses and industries emerge orienting a new capital would be adverse to their interest. The newly developed ambitious bourgeois class and agitated Zamindars interest became same and side by side the lawyers, barristers also made apprehension that, if higher court gets established in Dhaka the work space would be curtailed. It is needless to say that, all these Zamindars, businessmen, industrialists, lawyers and barristers were Hindus.

The powerful movement against the Bengal partition had been built in all over India. This movement got a far-width result in the future which brought power in the freedom movement against the Britishers, but the Muslims could not take part in that. The movement against Bengal partition was basically against Muslims and deeply against the interest of the Muslims. For the demand of this movement, those reactionary radical, militant leaders emerged in the working space; all of them were against Muslims as perceived by some scholars.³

In 1911, 12th December the 'Partition of Bengal' had been declared null and void. The once more union of the two Bengal's brought conflicts between the Hindus and the Muslims, what further brought the permanent partition of Bengal in 1947. From this issue of 'Partition of Bengal' only the Hindu and Muslim got parted from each other. The liberation movement against colonialism flowed with fundamentalism. The Hindu nationalism and Muslim nationalism emerged with difference in Bengal. The Muslim leadership (till that time basically the feudal class) started realizing that, their interests are

³ Ibid and also see Maolana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

different than Hindus and it cannot be protected in the hands of Hindus. Muslim middle class started emerging that time and they are the inheritors of this consciousness, and they led the movement for independent Pakistan.

The movement against the partition of Bengal basically introduced as “Swadeshi Andolan” (movement for the mother-land), also used the metaphor of Hindu God and Goddesses to represent the mother-land. In the first decade of the twentieth century the associations like ‘Yogantar’ and ‘Anushilon’ had their principles linked with Goddesses like ‘Kali’ and ‘Gita’ and Muslim infiltration was totally prohibited; they stated clearly that ‘no one is to be admitted who is non-Hindu or who has any spite against the Hindus.’ *Bankimchandra* also portrayed the mother-land as Goddess Durga. The Muslim middle class built their own doctrine in this fundamentalist nature of the movement. The leaders of the movement against Bengal partition only gave importance to the external issue of unity of Hindu-Muslims but ignored the issue of the opportunity towards self-development and self-establishment of the Muslims of East-Bengal through the Bengal partition.⁴

The reaction by a Muslim towards the ‘Vande Mataram’ song is totally different from a Hindu. A nation which is multi-community, multi-religion based, cannot go for the song. The song written by *Bankimchandra* basically extolled the mother-land through the worshipping of Goddess Durga. So when the issue had come up to make this particular song as the national anthem, due to the valid reasons, the Muslims opposed the demand. The provincial Congress government made it obligatory to sing this song in the schools. In 1937, the Muslims started opposing it extensively. Heated discussion and debates, stimulation sprung up on the issue of ‘Vande Mataram’ would be the national anthem or not of the country.

Rabindranath Tagore commented saying that, the national anthem of India should be one what can be sung by a Hindu, Muslim, Christian and also a Brahmin with great respect.

⁴ Bimalanda Shasmal, *How India Got Partitioned*. And also see Dr, B.R.Ambedkar, ‘Pakistan or Partition of India’ .p-115. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

The song based on worshipping Hindu Goddesses had to be swallowed by the Muslims? These ideas (mother-land portraying as the Goddesses) cannot be sold to them, due to the reason of their religion where idol worshipping is prohibited.⁵

Sir Nripendranath Sarkar against the demand to make the song as the national anthem, said that, 'the song has emerged from the Muslim hatred and grudge; Bangkimchandra in 'Ananda Math' made Bhabananda to sing the song who was one of the main devotee. The devotees of Ananda Math were having a vow to chase the Muslims ('Nere') away.'⁶

In 1937, Muslim society had come to the forefront with their movement towards political rights. Muslim league had established with great force. During that time the Congress became a so called non-fundamentalist party. The Hinds were having the upper hand in each and every professional sector.⁷

Bengal Pact

In April, 1923 'Deshbandhu' (the friend of the nation) *Chittaranjan Das* in the provincial conference in Sirajganj signed the historic "Bengal Pact" aiming the establishment of political, economic rights of Muslims through 55 percent reservation in the service sector and autonomous institutions. But his pact had been criticized by so many Congressmen. After his departure from the country, the pact had been declared null and void. This resulted to the withdrawal of the Bengali Muslims from the Congress, and planted the first seed for partition of the country.⁸

⁵ The letter of Rabindranath Tagore to Buddhadev Basu. *Desh Literature Edition*, Kolkata, India, 1974 (Bengali Year, 1381) and also see Dr. Enamul Haque, "The New Problems of the University", *Bulbul*, Falgun, 1936(Bengali Year.1343)

⁶ *Bulbul*, Falgun, 1933 (Bengali Year, 1340). And also see Tajul Islam Hashmi, *Fundamentalism and Nationalism*, Dhaka University Magazine, 2nd Part, 1974 (Bengali Year,1381). Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

⁷ Abul Mansur Ahmed. 'Amar Dekha Rajnitir Panchash Bochor' (Fifty years of Politics, As I Saw It). Dhaka: The Adarsha Printing Press, 1970.

⁸ Maolana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*. P-21. Quoted in Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.* And also see Azad, Abu'l Kalam, Presidential Address to the Indian National Congress. In Mushirul Hasan, *India's Partition Process, Strategy and Mobilization (Ed.)*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1940.

Some Congress leaders criticized the pact by saying that, before Muslims never objected if anyone plays the drums in front of the mosques. In the pact the issue has been raised and has given importance. The given representation rights in the management committees and the reservation in government services will establish the Muslim reign in the country.⁹ All the Hindu newspapers of Bengal demanded for scrapping the pact. In 1947 the same people asked for the Bengal partition with unprevented/unimpeded demands.

Lahore Proposal and Hindu response

On 23rd March, 1940 in the session of Muslim league an important proposal got passed on the issue of a different land/state for the Muslims. The proposal was known as “Lahore Proposal”. It is important to note that, in this proposal there were no demand for ‘Pakistan’ but the proposal demanded the establishment of two separate autonomous states in the two different areas of integral India based on Muslim majority population. But in 1946, in the Delhi Session the Lahore Proposal had been reformatted, where proposed ‘states’ before made one state and ceremonially “the proposal for Pakistan” had been passed.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, if Congress has to receive the idea to divide the country they have to go on my dead body, till I’m alive, I won’t give my approval. (March, 1947) but within a few days the Congress approved the partition proposal by taking the consent from Gandhi (14th June, 1947). He also said that, ‘if the ‘Pakistan’ is a religious belief to Mr. Jinnah then undivided India is the same to me’ (Harijan, 1942), but again within a few days on the same paper that, ‘if Muslims want the partition of the country, then the country division should take place’.

When the Muslims started educating themselves in the western education they became self-conscious, and then the neighbor’s inhuman religious cognition, social division

⁹ *Amritabazar Magazine*, 4th November, 1926. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

through caste, hatred made them self-conscious and apathetic. And this community based consciousness also made them having animosity towards Hindu to a great extent.¹⁰

The feudal class leadership represented by Sohrawardy, Khaja, Syad, Nawab were majority in numbers lead the movement for autonomous Pakistan. This class lived for many generations in Bengal, but never talked in Bengali, they became the representatives of the common, lower middle class Bengali Muslims.

Two Nation s Theory

Jinnah on the basis of 'Two nations Theory' gave the speech in the Muslim League's Lahore Session in 1940 by saying,

*"We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definitions. We are a nation of hundred million and more, we are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions. In short, we have our own distinctive outlook in life and of life."*¹¹

According to *Arabinda Ghosh*,

*"India's bigger and intense political wakeful state the indispensable preparation would be, bringing common people with the invitation, establish the future pride through the past history, to give life the India's politics through India's religion and spiritual enthusiasm."*¹²

BipinChandra and Aurobindo in fact took no positive steps to include Muslims in the movement against British imperialism or in the Indian nationality that was being created. Both opposed the Muslim demand for reserved seats in the new councils. When India was divided in 1947, Aurobindo wrote,

¹⁰ Golam Murshid, *op. cit*

¹¹ Jinnah's Speech in the Muslim League's Lahore Session in 1940. Quoted in W.C. Smith, *The Muslim League, 1942-45*. Lahore. Pakistan. 1945.

¹² Speeches and Writings of B.G.Tilak-Appreciation by Arabinda Ghosh. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit*.

*'The partition of the country must go-it is hoped by a slackening of tension, by a progressive understanding of the need of peace and concord.'*¹³

Non Hindus in India, wrote *M.S. Golwalkar*, must 'adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, and must entertain no idea but the glorification of Hindu race and culture'. They must live wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment-not even citizen's rights'.¹⁴

And according to *Bipin Pal*, 'the wakeful state of our national consciousness and hope-desires got influenced by the principles of power of the ancient time and Durga, Kali, Jagaddhatri, Bhavani and the fancied idol and the body by the worshipper of the ancient Hindu power emerged as a new grace. The soul of India is mother Goddess. Worshipping of the mother Goddess is our natural spiritual culture/tradition. It is our spiritualization and sensitization of our joint life procedures. This is the ultimate development of our social desire and body of the nation. It is inseparably linked with our greatest principle of our humanity.'¹⁵

The bigger chunk of the revolutionary militant group joined Congress after a point. Most of them were openly against Muslim and their supremacy in Bengal politics made the Muslims to go away from the Congress. In 1926 *Motilal Nehru* wrote a letter to his son Jawaharlal where he mentioned that, 'unfortunately the Bengali revolutionaries are fundamentalist minded'.¹⁶ The revolutionaries jumped into the 'stop cow killing' movement side by side with the movement against Britishers. According to *Rabindranath*, 'the educated Hindu revolutionaries wanted to establish the conjured political independence on the quicksand of the bind of social slavery, which basically

¹³ Peter Heehs, *op. cit*

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Bipinchandra Pal. *The Soul of India: A Constructive Study of Indian Thoughts and Ideals*. Calcutta. India. 1958 And also see Peter Heehs. *op. cit*.

¹⁶ Nehru, Motilal: *A Bunch of Old Letters*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha. *op. cit*.

made the Muslim community especially Bengali Muslims to be aloof from the Congress led nationalism. In their eyes it was not only the movement against Britishers but also a movement in the motive to subordinate them by the Hindus. The freedom movement in a great extent was motivated towards the possession of the power by the educated Hindu. They never wanted to give the share of the power volition to the Muslims. When the Muslims realized after educating themselves that they will be backward in the process of possessing power they called for a separate nationalism for Muslims that resulted in the partition of India and separation from India.

The country got divided on the basis of the acknowledgement of a fundamentalist belief that, in India there are two different nations Hindu and Muslim and their base of self-control is different. The Congress accepted the demand because they were obligated to do that, not because they supported it. But it is true that, the fundamentalist, violent behavior of some Hindu Congressmen were responsible for the demand for a separate homeland by the Muslims. To them the Indian nationalism was Hindu nationalism only. The Communist Party of India supported the Muslim League's demand for a separate homeland for Muslims. The first decade of the twentieth century only the Muslim League had been founded and within three decades it became a political organization and also the representative of the second largest populations of India. The biased/prejudiced and undemocratic behavior of the Congress leadership made Muslim League so popular and their demands of 'Pakistan'. The Communist Party of India out of fear to lose the support of Muslim common people supported the demand for 'Pakistan'. And they try to look for the content of hopes and desires of the Muslim common man in the demand for Pakistan.¹⁷

The demand for Pakistan movement emerged when Muslim community's cultural life became endangered and the establishment of 'Pakistan' took place to give grace to the different cultural life of the Muslims, this belief originated from the economic and political reasons. In the time of freedom movement Muslim middle class for their own

¹⁷ Gyan Chakrabarty, *The Past Era of Communist Agitation in the Dhaka District*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

class interest invented the theory and influenced the majority of the population that is peasants, laborers through propaganda to formulate their class based purpose.¹⁸

The British ruling elite confirmed the fact that they would only welcome the rise of communalism which would divide the electorate along communal lines in the ensuing elections of 1946 in which 'the Muslim League and the Congress would sweep the Muslim and caste Hindu polls respectively'.¹⁹ The elections of 1946, in which the BPML (Bengal Provincial Muslim League) secured a landslide victory in the Mohammedan Constituencies on the 'Pakistan issue' which attracted the Bengali Muslim middle class and the masses as well.²⁰

On 16th May, 1946 the 'Ministers Mission' had been declared where there was one condition which saying that, after abandoning power by the Britishers if any state from any particular group²¹ wants to come out from that group, it can do so. But Congress opposed the condition on the basis of the excuse that, the centre should have a strong government and also opposed the idea to include Assam in the C group. The Prime-Minister of Assam, *Gopinath Bardalai* opposed to be with Muslim majority based Bengal, and he was supported by Gandhi and Nehru. They demanded that every state should give their consent first to join a group. They also had problem with the B group. Their meaningless, baseless opposition basically paved the way for partition on the basis of fundamentalism. Congress could not show their activities, political character above the question of religion, Hindu and Muslim. The behavior of Congress on the issue of Assam to join the Muslim majoritarian Bengal or not; and their suggestion to Assam not to join

¹⁸ Badruddin Umar, *Cultural Fundamentalism*. op. cit

¹⁹ Rangalal Sen, "Elite Conflict and Muslim Politics in Bengal: 1937-1947", In S.R. Chakravarty, Virendra Narain, *Bangladesh*. Vol.1, History and Culture. South Asia Studies series 12 (Ed.). South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, India, 1986.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ There were three groups in the planning of the Ministers Mission to abandon power and establish federalism by the British government. The A group was having Madras, Bombay, Madhya Pradesh/Province. Orissa, Bihar and United Province. The B group contains Sindh. Punjab. North West Border Province and Baluchistan. And the C group had Bengal and Assam. (Kankar Sinha. February. 2007).

them out of fear that Muslims of Bengal would have the upper hand in the case, again proved that Congress does not represent Muslim interest in the true sense.

Direct Struggle Day

In 1946, on 16th August Muslim League declared the day as 'Direct Struggle Day'. On this day in Calcutta an awful communal riot took place and for continuous three days the infernal massacre/carnage took place of Hindu-Muslims. A least six thousands people were killed after being stabbed, shot and half-burnt and twenty thousands people had been killed including women.

The Muslim League was publicly accused of being responsible for this communal riot.²² The day was declared a gazetted holiday before hand by the Prime-Minister of Bengal, Hossain Shahid Sohrawardy. The leader of Muslim League *Khaja Nazeemuddin* in a conference at Calcutta Muslim Institute said that, 'Muslims direct struggle is not against the Britishers but Hindus.' According to *Abul Mansur Ahmed*, this was a clear declaration of war against Hindus.²³ The Congress leadership had not felt important to visit Calcutta after such a terrible communal riot. This communal riot gave the opportunity to the congress leadership to prove that, Hindu-Muslims can not stay together in the integral India; otherwise the condition would turn towards a civil war.

Mahatma Gandhi said to Lord Wavel that, 'If India needs a blood bath then she shall have it'²⁴ when Lord Wavel requested him to give the agreement on Minister Mission. The communal riot got spread in Noakhali, Bihar and afterwards Punjab and other provinces. In Noakhali the communal riot took place for a long time, it could not be

²² Leonard Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj*. Jaico Publishing House. Bombay and also see Abul Mansur Ahmed, *op. cit.*

²³ Abul Mansur Ahmed, *op. cit.* And also see Ali Ahad, *The Politics of Bangladesh, 1945-75* and also see article written by Leonard Mosley, *Daily Calcutta Statesman*, 5th August, 1946. Quoted in Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.*

²⁴ Bimananda Shasmal, *op. cit.*

controlled very easily. Gandhi and Nehru visited Noakhali to stop the riot. Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq in the worst days of communal riots in Bengal proposed to Jinnah that the Muslim League should take the initiative in an attempt to come to terms with the Congress.²⁵ But the central leadership of Muslim League rejected the proposal.

After being emerged as a separate political party to represent the Muslim voice, Muslim League still had given their direct support to the British Government. While Congress demanded, “Quit India”, the Muslim League demanded, “Divide and Quit, if you do not divide, stay”. The separate homeland for Muslims that is ‘Pakistan’ basically an independence achieved without a real struggle (something wrong with it).²⁶

Nehru writes that, India must lessen its ‘religiosity’ and turn to science, himself implicitly accepting the Orientalist stereotype of India as a place dominated by outdated modes of thinking, hence religion.²⁷ The politics of the Congress and Muslim League are responsible to bring the conflict and bitterness between Hindu and Muslims in the decades of the forties. After taking the power Lord Mountbatten decided to handover the power to the Indians within 1st June, 1948.

Nehru agreed on the issue of partition of India. Jawaharlal Nehru fought for independent integral India, he criticized/ridiculed Jinnah for his Pakistan demand, criticized Muslim League for its activities, but within a month he bowed down towards the personality of Mountbatten. Lord Mountbatten played such diplomacy to obligate Nehru to give his agreement on the partition proposal and Nehru’s consent was very important that time to get Congress’s agreement.²⁸

²⁵ Dr. Rameshchandra Majumdar. *History of Ancient Bengal*. Calcutta, India, 1971.

²⁶ Muhammad Oaliullah. *Our freedom struggle*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.*

²⁷ Barbara D. Metcalf. *op. cit.*

²⁸ Leonard Mosley. And also see Abul kalam Azad. *op. cit.*

India partitioned

On 15th June, 1947 Congress gave ceremonially the agreement to the partition of India proposal. In the proposal, the legislative Assembly of the Punjab and Bengal state got the power to take the final decision for their own partition. Sindh's legislative assembly also got the same power to join any one country out of India and Pakistan. On the issue of North-West border province the plebiscite had been chosen to decide their destiny, and the same for Assam's Bengal border based Sylhet district, where Muslims were in majority.

It had been decided that, the power would be handover on 15th August, 1947. When the leaders were frenzied in the happiness of the independence, in the days of 1947, August the Punjab and Bengal again faced the dreadful communal riots, massacre of common Hindu, Muslim people. The people to save their life were running away with their lives to East and West.

At last 'Pakistan' and 'India' named two different countries had been emerged. The greater province of Pakistan, the East Bengal situates two thousand miles away from capital Karachi. Dhaka became the capital of the province. Khaja Nazeemuddin became the chief minister. In this time, Hossain Shahid Sohrawardy proposed for independent Bengal to avoid the partition of Bengal. But the Muslim League and the Congress of Bengal opposed the proposal as well as the central leadership of the two parties.

On the basis of Nehru's opposition, the draft/manuscript of the plan of hand-overing the power went through reformation. Nehru might have thought, if Bengal was allowed to decide by its own to go for independence then there would be so many other province would decide not to go to either of the country (India and Pakistan) and make them independent.²⁹ But surprisingly Jinnah agreed to the proposal of integral independent Bengal. He said,

²⁹ Bimalanda Shasmal. *op. cit*

*"I should be delighted, what is the use of Bengal without Calcutta. They had much better remain united and independent. I am sure they would be on friendly terms with Pakistan."*³⁰

It has been said that, Jinnah's agreement on the proposal of independent Bengal was basically a political move. Jinnah knew that, the Congress is not going to agree on the proposal. If Congress would give its agreement, the establishment of Muslim majoritarian ruling would be taking place and what might resulted in joining Pakistan at last.

The Hindus extensively opposed the proposal. Hindu Mahasabha came on streets in the demand of partition of Bengal. Bengal Congress also gave their agreement, support, opinion to divide Bengal. They did not want to go for a majoritarian Muslim rule. It is interesting to note that, in the starting of the century Hindus sacrificed their life to unite two parts of Bengal. After four decades the same Bengali Hindus came down on streets/roads again to divide the Bengal.³¹ Just after the partition, Sardar Ballavbhai Patel said that, 'who urged for Pakistan, after accomplishing it, they do not have the right to stay in India.'

According to Bengal Muslim League Secretary Abul Hashim, (29th April, 1947), 'to rule Bengal, Indian and Markin-Eng foreign capital had been invested in which hundred percent in West Bengal only. By noticing the increasing/gradual socialist tendency in Bengal Muslim League the foreign rulers are getting terrified out of fear of the confiscation of their property. It seems like the inspiration and encouragement by the Eng-Indian alliance is responsible for the recent fundamentalist disturbance in Bengal.'³²

Nehru's disagreement towards the proposal of independent integral Bengal has shown his disinterest/apathy towards East Bengal to make it a part of the independent India. Towards the end of 1946, in Noakhali, Mr. Nehru said that, he only sees water, mud,

³⁰ Jinnah's Statement after the Discussion with Lord Mountbatten, 23.04.1947. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

³¹ Rangalal Sen, *op. cit.* And also see N.N Mitra, *The Indian Annual Register (Ed.)*. January-June, 1947, Vol. 1. Calcutta. India, The Annual Register Office.

³² Rangalal Sen. *Elite Conflict and Muslim Politics in Bengal 1937-1947. op. cit.*

bushes-jungle only everywhere in East Bengal and he firmly said that, he wants to see East-Bengal to be totally isolated/separated from the main integral India.³³

The Bengal in spite of having the same language, in a way the same culture got divided into two different parts-East Bengal and West Bengal on the basis of Muslim Bengal and Hindu Bengal. Through the proposed independent integral Bengal, Bengal's Hindu and Muslim without extinction/abolishing their separate entity, by keeping propriety with the affect of Bengal's natural beauty and weather in a joint endeavor could have built a greater common tradition and culture in the human civilization of the world.

The elite conflict and Muslim politics in Bengal particularly in the period from 1937 to 1947 made the attempts and efforts frustrated to build up politics on secular economic and political programmes by the conservative and fundamentalist political forces.³⁴

Within five weeks Sir Cyril Radcliff divided India without having any knowledge about India's tiny details, the problem of different religious communities. Dividing India should have been a project of some years but finishing the mission within five weeks, separated a river-sided city from a river, a locality from its paddy field, an industry from its goods yard, so and so forth.³⁵

On the basis of nationality dividing the arm forces resulted in the transition of the military force into fundamentalist bitterness, what was never before.³⁶ As soon as the partition, the division of military force also took place and the force directly made them involved in the terrible communal riots in some provinces. Hindu and Sikh army men helped others to kill Muslims and vice-a versa. There was a proposal to have a joint military command for some time after the partition, but the proposal had been opposed by the Congress leaders mainly and as well as Muslim League leaders. The military force could not free them from the fundamentalist tradition due to the reason of the separation

³³ Rammanohar Lohia, *Guiltymen of India's Partition*. Rammanohar Lohia Samata Vidyalaya Nyas Publication Dept. Hyderabad. India. 1970.

³⁴ Rangalal Sen. *op. cit*

³⁵ Leonard Mosley, *op. cit*

³⁶ Maolana Abul Kalam Azad, *op. cit*

of the military force on the basis of protecting fundamentalist interest, day by day, they became more fundamentalist in the both country, India and Pakistan.

No agreement had been taken from the Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Tanchanga, Murong ethnic communities and people of Chittagong Hill Tracts on the issue of joining Pakistan or not. They became a part of Pakistan through the partition of India. The British Government (Radcliff-Mountbatten) thought about Hindu-Muslims but they did not have the respite/scope to think about the tribal/ethnic communities. Today Chittagong Hill Tracts is agitated/restless, to find the reason behind it, we have to look in the past and the history.

Chapter Three

The Journey through Pakistan

'Pakistan' emerged as a new state in the sub-continent on 14th August, 1947. The father of Pakistani, Quaid E. Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah delivered a speech in the Pakistan Public Council, where he says that,

*"I know there are people who do not quite agree with the division of India and the partition of Punjab and Bengal. Much has been said against it, but now it has been accepted, it is the duty of every one of us to loyally abide by it and honourably act according to the agreement which is now final and binding on all. If you change your past and work together in spirit that everyone of you, no matter what community he belongs to, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this state with equal rights privileges and obligations. There will be no end to the progress you will make."*¹

He also says,

"In course of time Hindus will cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state".²

This declaration of Jinnah is known as "Charter of Minority Rights" now.

After the establishment of Pakistan, Jinnah wanted to build Muslim League as a secular political organization. "Jinnah was even ready in 1947 to change the name and the character of the Muslim League Party. It was reported that a Pakistan National League would be formed which would replace the Muslim League and be open to all citizens of Pakistan irrespective of religion, caste or creed".³

¹ The Debate in Pakistan Public Council. Ist Part (1), pp-19-20. Quoted in Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.*

² Ibid

³ Daily Dawn, Karachi, 26th November, 1947 And also see M.G.Kabir. *Minority Politics in Pakistan*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.*

Two Nations Theory and East Pakistan

It has been said that, Jinnah's 'Two Nations Theory' was basically a political dexterity and not an infallible and ever admissible theory to him.⁴ Jinnah on the other side placed/established the Khaja Nazeemuddin-Nuril Amin groups in the East Pakistan and removed the popular leadership of East-Pakistan from power.

In 1948, the role of Jinnah to confront/encounter the language movement of East Pakistan, his speech about the language movement in racecourse ground in Dhaka, his speech on the Dhaka University Convocation Day, his interview/meeting with the 'state language working committee', discussion with the student representatives and his farewell speech before leaving Dhaka prove his resort to erroneous two nations theory as a political tactic.⁵

On 19th March, 1948 seven months after the independence Jinnah visited to Dhaka. On 21st March at racecourse ground he says that, 'some communist and foreign supported agents are there hidden inside the province and they are trying to go for reuniting East Bengal with India and that is their main aim. The people of the province should be careful about them.'⁶ In the eve of the language movement of East Pakistan Jinnah's pointing out the people of the movement as foreign supported agent and more clearly as Indian agent, basically was a motive to instigate fundamentalism and fundamentalist power.⁷

⁴ Abdul Haque, *Bangali Jatiotabad o Onnyanno Proshongo* (Bengali nationalism and other issues) And also see Abul Mansur Ahmed, *op. cit.*

⁵ Badruddin Umar, *East Bengal's Language Movement and Contemporary Politics*. Vol.1. Mawla Brothers, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1970.

⁶ Quaid E. Azam Mohammad Jinnah's Speeches as Governor General, Pakistan Publications, Karachi. And also see Jamil-ud-din Ahmad, *Jinnah, Muhammad Ali: Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah (Ed.)* Vol.1. Lahore, Pakistan, 1968.

⁷ Rashiduzzaman. M.. 'East-West Conflicts in Pakistan: Bengali Regionalism, 1947-1970'. In A. Jeyaratnam Wilson and Dennis Dalton, *The States of South Asia: Problems of National Integration*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1982.

He also says that, 'after the failure to prevent the establishment of Pakistan, the enemies of the country became frustrated and now want to bring disruption among the Pakistani Muslims and want to destroy the state. They kept their attempt unrestrained through the instigation of the provincialism. What is the need/necessity to call us a Bengali or Sindhi, or Punjabi or Pathan? Basically we all are Muslims.'⁸

The East Bengal Muslims always struggled and were in quest for their identity that is Bengali or Muslims. Before being successful in that search for an ensured answer, they all became a part of Pakistan.

Jinnah declared on 26th March, 1948 at the racecourse ground that 'Urdu' will be the national/state language of Pakistan and not any other language. According to him, 'Urdu has been nourished by the lakhs and lakhs of Muslims in this sub-continent; from one end to another end of Pakistan, each and everyone understands the language. And above all this language (Urdu) has more Islamic culture and tradition in a real sense from any other provincial language; Urdu is more nearer to the languages of other Islamic countries.'⁹

It's very interesting to note that Jinnah was always anglicized and not so devout Muslim that he will go for Namaz regularly, but when he became the main proponent of 'Two Nation's Theory', he started projecting himself as a true and very devout Muslim. He used the 'Two nation's Theory' tactics on East Bengal in a very contemptible way and became successful. Basically he planted the seed of fundamentalism in Pakistan, and after his death that became a big tree now.

Pakistan had to become a Muslim homeland and the minority communities could easily see that their opportunities would be very restricted. The minority communities' fears were redoubled by the fact that political power was captured by the Muslim League, which allowed no place for Hindus in the political decision making arena.¹⁰

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ M.G Kabir. pp-13-14, *op. cit*

Sohrawardy and Fazlul Haq again and again requested the Muslims of Pakistan to not to wound minority feelings and security in the country.

Fazlul Haq said that,

“If any Muslim wounds Hindu’s feelings in Pakistan he would be committing wrong against religion. I told before to Boundary Commission that it was impossible to divide Bengal which is one. If Pakistan meant any oppression on Hindus then I would say Pakistan was political bluff.”¹¹

It seems that, the central Muslim League leadership basically used the East Bengal Muslim League leadership/leaders for the mission ‘Pakistan’ but after accomplishing it they have thrown away the East Bengal leadership from the whole political scenario and power. Whatever Sohrawardy or Fazlul Haq said, the prime minister of Pakistan Liaquat Ali says firmly in the public council that,

‘Pakistan is a Muslim State’¹²

He also said,

“Pakistan was founded because the Muslims of this sub-continent wanted to build up their lives in accordance with the teachings and traditions of Islam, because they wanted to demonstrate to the world that Islam provided a panacea to the many diseases which have crept into the life of humanity today.”¹³

In 1950, in East Pakistan (East Bengal) an extensive terrible communal riot took place. The Hindus started migrating themselves from their own place to West Bengal due to reason of political, social and economic and on top of it communal riot, massacre/carnage of their lives, security became another important reason for their migration. Muslim League government did not give any protection to their lives and

¹¹ Amalendu Dey, *Pakistan Proposal and Fazlul Haq*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

¹² Public Council Debate, Part-5 March 7, 1949. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

¹³ Ibid

security, what made them also to leave their house, property, valuables and migrate to West Bengal/India.¹⁴

On 8th April, 1950 in Delhi, historic ‘Nehru-Liaquat Pact’ had been signed. In this pact, to prevent communal riots some clear statements and order have been included. A decision also had been taken to establish a minority commission. The pact held,

“The government of India and Pakistan solemnly agree that each shall ensure to the minorities throughout its territory, complete equality of citizenship, irrespective of religion, a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honour, freedom of movement within each country and freedom of occupation, speech and worship, subject to law and morality. Members of the minorities shall have equal opportunity with members of the majority community to participate to the public of their country, to hold political or other office and to serve in their country’s civil and armed forces. Both governments declare these rights to be fundamental and undertake to enforce them effectively.”

But neither the East Pakistan Government nor the Muslim League leaders were really earnest in the matter of implementation of the Delhi Agreement. In the “Objective Resolutions” (7th march, 1949) of the future constitution of Pakistan it had been mentioned that,

“Where in the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed.”

That means only democratic system and fundamental rights would get the acknowledgement, which has been acknowledged by Islam. In the democracy, based on religion, the minorities won’t receive the equal respect like the majority. About fifty lakhs of Hindus during that time had left since the partition of the country.

It had been hoped that the Muslim League in an independent Pakistan is going to follow the principal objectives, what they have promised that is, the economic interests of the Muslims in Bengal. Muslims were mostly cultivators and laborers, both educationally

¹⁴ Badruddin Umar, *East Bengal’s Language Movement and Contemporary Politics*. Vol.2. Mawla Brothers, Dhaka. Bangladesh, 1975. (The description of the riot has been taken from the Diary of Tazuddin Ahmed, 10.2.1952) And also see Taya Jingkin. *Reporting India*. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

and economically backward. It had also been hoped that, the ministry would lead to the undertaking on a wide scale of legislative and administrative measures which, while promoting the mutual welfare of the vast bulk of Bengal's population and undermining the foundations of vested interest and privilege would further the cause of communal peace and harmony. But in the reality, the aspirations went to the waste bin.

A crisis of identity: Muslim or Bengali?

A dominant feature of the nineteenth century campaigns of Islamisation in Bengal was the attempted rejection of virtually all that was Bengali in the life of Muslim as something incompatible with the ideas and principles of Islam. The preachers' conception of an Islamic polity was based on a vague notion of the Middle Eastern values, and it was their dream so to transform the lives of the ordinary Muslims that they conformed exclusively to this trans-Indian pattern. The very nature of their propaganda (Pan-Islamic)¹⁵ emphasizing the distinctive ethos of Islam was bound to create great misgivings among the Muslim population about their association with Bengal, including its cultural past which was a part of their heritage and a sense of separate identity to its extreme. The new emphasis was on differentiating popular Islam in Bengal from the local cultural traditions, much of which now came to be closely identified with Hinduism and polytheism and therefore as anti-Islamic.¹⁶

Improvements in communication that brought the rural Muslims into close contact with their urban co-religionists, wider diffusion of education, Islamic as well as western, and finally communal tensions resulting from a variety of social and political factors, all

¹⁵ Pan-Islamism, with its emphasis on close links with the larger world of Islam. implied a quest for a trans-Indian identity. The Pan-Islamic fervor however did not remain confined to mere theoretical exposition by the higher *Ulema*. The whole corpus of literature produced by the *mullahs* during the period is replete with notions of an Islamic culture strikingly alien to the local modes of life and based on their vision of the Middle Eastern world. Their writings were mostly adaptations from tales of romance and heroism in Arabic, Persian or Turkish. (Rafiuddin Ahmed. 1981).

¹⁶ Rafiuddin Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906: A Quest for Identity*. London and New York. Oxford University Press, 1981

contributed to the increasing aloofness of the ordinary Muslims from their Hindu neighbors.¹⁷

The rising middle classes amongst the local Muslims-the small land-holders, village priests and above all, the new urban educated-who in their search for respectability and a 'genuine' Islamic identity repudiated their Bengali origins and climbed hard to find a toehold at least on the lower rungs of the *ashraf* social ladder. Local names, dress and language gradually became repugnant to the neophytes as symbols of an un-Islamic culture. Clearly the emphasis was on the adoption of the 'correct' Islamic stigmata as essential evidence of their Muslim identity in every possible element in their life.¹⁸

This middle class insistence on an exclusive Islamic identity was no doubt intensified in the late nineteenth century by the economic competition and political rivalry with the Hindu *bhadralok*. Inadequate economic opportunities and the increasing hostility of Hindu extremists confirmed the educated Muslims in their separatist stance and pushed them into the camp of the upper *ashraf*.¹⁹ The constant harping on extraterritorial links thus made the Muslims to believe, Bengal as non-Muslim land. The consequent crisis of identity was reflected in a curious distinction. Hindus alone became 'Bengalis', the Muslims being only 'Muslims', liberated from all local ethnic affiliations. This odd dichotomy became a part of the Bengali Hindu vocabulary as well.²⁰

These attempts at instant Arabicization of the most personal aspects of one's identity symbolized the basic dilemma facing the Bengali Muslim: was it possible to be a Muslim as well as a Bengali at the same time? Generally the answer seemed to be in the negative. The fact that a Bengali identity was in no way inconsistent with their faith in Islam was hardly appreciated by the religious and social elite of the time. Identification of Islam with the social and cultural traditions of Arabia and Persia induced many to reject their Bengali past and create artificially an imaginary alien identity for themselves.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

The question of foreign origin became a preoccupation especially among the educated Muslims, actually after the publication of the 1872 census report which revealed the numerical preponderance of the Muslims in Bengal and focused attention on the question of their origin. The principal explanation of the census was for the presence of so many Muslims in the remote corners of Bengal basically 'not due so much to the introduction of Mughal blood into the country as to the conversion of the former inhabitants. The conclusion was that the proportion of Muslims near the former seats of Muslim power was much smaller than in the remote eastern Bengal districts, where the largest concentrations of Muslims were to be found. Migrants from abroad, was argued, were unlikely to have moved in such numbers to the far-off backwoods.'²¹

The Hindu writers constantly told their readers that 'the Muslims had once ruled and oppressed us, that they spread their religion with the *Koran* in one hand and the sword in the other, that the Muslim rulers had abducted our women, destroyed our temples, polluted our sacred places...'²² This tendency to vilify the Muslims and misrepresent Muslim society and culture deeply affected the educated Muslims.

Before the independence era through fundamentalism Hindu-Muslim bourgeois for their own class interest organized some movement and it was necessary to create perfect mental atmosphere to detach the views of the peasants, laborers from class struggle and to bind them in the fundamentalist structure. The same way in the past independence period, Muslim League government tried to throw the common people of East Bengal in the fundamentalist whirlpool/vortex and wanted to snatch away the freedom of speech, fundamental rights of them. But the attack on the mother tongue (Bengali) by the Pakistani government could not be successful and the attempt to impose Urdu on Bengali speaking people of East Bengal by the name of 'Islamic Tamaddun' had been failed. Through the movement for the vernacular language, that is Bengali as the state language the Muslims of East Bengal for the first time gained a new perspective and that is a

²¹ N. Levtzion. *Conversion to Islam*. New York, 1979.

²² Rafiuddin Ahmed, *op. cit.*

secular culture and a new cherished/desired inspiration to practice secular politics and culture.

Before independence the conflicts and afterwards separation/disintegration took place between Hindu and Muslims on the basis of the middle class Hindu-Muslims inequality in their economic life, this resulted in 'two nation's theory' and establishment of Pakistan as a separate homeland for Muslims. After the establishment/emerging of Pakistan, the Muslim middle class started facing the inequality in economic sector from not the Hindu middle class but the West Pakistan centric bourgeois, bureaucrats, businessman/traders and politicians. This resulted in commencing a new consciousness in their cultural and political life. But the fundamentalism did not get dissolved/abolished/faded away completely and indirectly was alive in the larger bourgeois class of Pakistan (West and East both part of it). For their own interest they kept the fundamentalism alive and always trying to put the all kinds of cultural life in a fundamentalist, undemocratic whirlpool/vortex to make it venomous.

The Muslim League leaders ruling the roost in Pakistan could not tolerate even the minimal demands of the East Bengali's and branded them as anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan. As the grievances of the people of East-Bengal began to increase, the ruling circles turned to Islam as a device to protect them and raised the slogan of 'Islam in danger'.

The rulers of Pakistan were using the name of Islam as a camouflage to hide their failure at the political and economic front. Islam as a faith was deeply rooted in the psyche of the Pakistani people including the people of East Bengal; yet it was not possible for them to distinguish between Islam as faith and Islam as a political tenet. Even Awami Muslim League, though critical of Pakistan's rulers had to take cognizance of Islam as an important factor in the country's politics. The United Front formed before the election of 1954 declared in the beginning of its 21 point programme that no law would be enacted in violation of the basic principles of the Quran and Sunnah. Pakistan's constitutions of 1956 and 1962 had made specific mention of Islam as the basis of politico-social and economic life of the people.²³

²³ Bangladesher Sadhinata Judha: Documents. vol. I, p-377. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

To categorize the Muslims all over India as a homogeneous entity, distinct from another homogeneous ethnic group, is of course grossly incorrect. In their ignorance fanaticism and naiveté the Mullahs became willing instruments in the hands of the more powerful interest groups and helped give shape to an ideology which could only have a limited success and that too for a brief period.²⁴

Bengali-Urdu divide

The Bengali-Urdu controversy brought to light the inherent clash of cultures between the Urdu-speaking elite and the Bengali Muslims. Notwithstanding the latter's growing desire for an Islamic identity, their roots in the culture proved too powerful to be swamped by the deliberate effort at alienation. There was an indirect effect of focusing popular attention on Hindu-Muslim cultural differences and thus contributed to Muslim exclusiveness. Although it ultimately resulted in an increased appreciation of Bengali by the educated Muslims, this helped a little to bridge the widening cultural gulf between the two communities. There were self-conscious efforts to create a dichotomy along communal lines in the language and literature of Bengal, the educated among both Hindus and Muslims 'invoking and glorifying the history of their respective religious and cultural background and in this way each tended to drift away from the other.'²⁵ Although the people did not ask for these changes, but offered on a silver platter, the majority accepted them willingly.²⁶

But it is undeniable that through the language/ vernacular movement in east Bengal, for the first time the Muslims transformed into Bengali Muslims. Since 1947, the struggle for vernacular language and culture was basically the struggle to return homeland of the middle class Muslims. The events leading to 21st February, 1952 gave a fillip to the growth of a non-communal attitude which also developed as an integral part of the

²⁴ Rafiuddin Ahmed: *op. cit* And also see M.Anisuzzaman. *op. cit*

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ M.Anisuzzaman. *op. cit*

Bengali identity.²⁷ The Bengali-Urdu question in effect highlighted the social contradictions in the Bengali Muslim society. It was also a major issue in the Muslim educational problem. The internecine conflict of culture implicit in this controversy remained muted in this period owing to the fervid and all-embracing quest for an Islamic identity. The depth of the cultural chasm became evident much later as a major element in the prolonged conflict and also for the reason of the unequal development of the capitalist structure of West Pakistan and lack of balance in economic sector between the two parts of Pakistan; out of which emerged the state of Bangladesh.

The Muslims of Bengal had underscored the Muslim identity during the later years of the British Raj. Once Pakistan was created they chose to emphasize their Bengali identity. Within five years of the founding of Bangladesh, there was another shift from Bengali to Bangladeshi; what did not succeed in the following years in resolving the problems of the *paharis* (hill people) in Bangladesh who claim to have a distinct identity for their own while the people from the plains remain critically divided on the Bengali-Bangladeshi issue.²⁸

Secularism in practice

Secularism as a philosophy of life and as it developed in the West, presents a new world-view in the contradiction to the other-worldliness advocated by the major world religions. It rejects the place of the supernatural and the sacred in the affairs of man. Man, not God, is the central focus of secularism.

In a general way, secularism has come to mean a) belief in the fulfillment of life in this world rather than in the hereafter, b) acceptance of reason, free inquiry and experiment as arbiters of human destiny, c) belief in the natural causation, that is, belief that every event has a cause located within the total system of events rather than outside it, d) inviolability of each human person irrespective of accidents of birth and inherent human right to

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

freedom and liberty. Thus this worldliness, rationalism, scientism and humanism are the basic tenets of secularism.

M. N. Roy comments that, secularism is not a political institution; it is a cultural atmosphere, which cannot be created by the proclamation of individuals, however highly placed and intensely sincere.²⁹

Talukdar Maniruzzaman argues that, such a 'cultural atmosphere' was absent in the sub continental society in general and in Bangladesh in particular. According to Maniruzzaman, "secularism in Bangladesh did not reflect Bangladesh's societal spirit and history. It arose as a utilitarian expediency in the political field."³⁰

It is the humanistic aspect of secularism that has affected a compromise between secularism and religion in the political arena in the Liberal Democratic West. Since every man has inalienable right to freedom of conscience he 'could be as religious as he liked, but his religion would be his own concern; he would not demand that others agree with him. He could ask for religious liberty, but not for his power'. 'The sublime faith will live in the individual'; out of all bounds of politics-the road to temporal power. In Jefferson's words, there is a 'wall of separation between Church and state' in a secular state. Of course, the model of secular state has not been fully realized in any of the western states. These states only attempt to approximate the model.³¹

As the social political fabric of the Indian society began to be torn asunder at different religious levels with the prospect of British departure from India, the Congress leaders advocated the separation of religion and politics to preserve Indian unity.

The popular leaders of the newly independent India could easily see that strict adherence to the Western model of secularism through the erection of an 'impassable wall' between religion and politics would result in their total rejection by the deeply religious people in

²⁹ Ali Riaz, *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh*. Rowman and Little Field Publishers, Lanham, 2004.

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Donald E. Smith, *India as a secular state*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1963. p.17

India. Secularism in India thus soon lost its Western character and flavour. The Indian leaders and jurists began to argue about, what they called the positive character of Western secularism.

Indeed, Indian secularism recognizes both the relevance and validity of religion in human life. In the context of the Constitution, secularism means that all religions practiced in India are entitled to equal freedom and protection.³²

Western notion of secularism insists on a complete separation between state and religion, the sub continental concept implies a role for the state in religious affairs. In the Indian sub continent, as *Tazeen Murshid* notes, “secular came to be defined as the binary opposite of communal, implying a tolerance of other religious communities.” She emphasizes that the idea of religious tolerance was enshrined in the constitution of India as *sarbadharmasamabhaba*, meaning the equality of all religions before the state, and in the 1972 constitution of Bangladesh as *dharmanirapekshata*, meaning religious neutrality. In neither case, does the state dissociate itself from matters pertaining to religion. Instead, it seeks to act as an impartial broker between the various religious communities. In the case of Bangladesh, religious neutrality meant the equal opportunity for all religions to participate in public affairs and benefit from state patronage. In the context of Indian constitution, secularism means that all religions practiced in India are entitled to equal freedom and protection.³³

It is no wonder that the salience of religion in Indian politics has continued to increase. There had been at least 5,000 communal incidents since partition, with the lower number (26) occurred in 1960 and the highest number (more than 350) in 1980, and most observers of the Indian scene agree that religious forces play a greater role in the Indian politics today than in the early years of independence.

³² P.B. Gajendragadkar. “The Concept of Secularism in Secular Democracy.” *New Delhi, weekly*. Annual Number, 1970. p. 71.

³³ Tazeen Murshid. *The Sacred and the Secular*. Calcutta: Oxford University Press. 1995.

Bangladesh-practice

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father of Bangladesh, was more sonorous than the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in the assertion of the secular character of the new Bangladesh. Nehru resisted the pressure to insert the word 'secular' in the Indian constitution. Sheikh Mujib on the other hand, incorporated secularism as one of the fundamental principles of state policy in the very preamble of the Bangladesh Constitution. But again the gap between proclamation and performance remained as wide in Bangladesh as it was in India for the same reason.

Since the West Pakistani elite sought to legitimize their dominance over East Pakistan in the name of building an Islamic state and thus, tried to give religious character to a secular conflict, Sheikh Mujib and many other lesser leaders opted for the separation of religion from politics. As a populist leader Sheikh Mujib was well aware of the depth of religious sentiments prevailing among his countrymen. Sheikh Mujib's secularism therefore did not mean the absence of religion in the public arena. He would protect and promote all religions at the societal level but prevent their entry into politics. As he explained:

*"Secularism does not mean absence of religion. Our only objection is that nobody will be allowed to use religion as a political weapon."*³⁴

Just on the morrow of independence and before Sheikh Mujib's return from West Pakistan prison (16th December 1971 to 9th January 1972), some of the secular intellectuals from the University of Dhaka took the lead in discontinuing the practice of Pakistan days in opening the programmes of the State Radio and Television with recitations from the Holy Koran and substituted a programme of 'Speaking the Truth' based on secular ethics.

³⁴ Sheikh Mujib's Speech in the Bangladesh Constituent Assembly on 4.11.1972, reprinted in Khandakar Mohammad Ilias, *Bangabandhu's Philosophy for Social Revolution in Bangladesh* (Ed.). Dhaka: Bangladesh Parishad, 1979. p.118

After having taken over the reins of government, Sheikh Mujib discontinued this religious neutrality of the mass media. He adopted the policy of equal opportunity of all religious and ordered citations from the holy books of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity at the start of the broadcasts by the State radio and television.

In the early years of Sheikh Mujib rule, the Education Ministry hurriedly took out all references to the Pakistani celebrities (Jinnah, Iqbal etc) but kept by and large Islamic content of the text books intact. The compulsory paper, Islamiyat was also continued.

Sheikh Mujib government appointed a commission on Education. The commission submitted an interim report in May, 1973. The report recommended the separation of religion from education. The commission circulated 9551 questionnaires among the most educated section of the people of Bangladesh. Only 21 percent among them were favoured the idea of secularizing the education system and 71 percent were in favor of having the modernized general system of education, and they argued for modernized religious education to be incorporated within the general system of education. The annual budgetary allocation for *madrasah* (Islamic educational institutions) was raised to taka 7.2 million in 1973 from taka 2.5 million in 1971.³⁵

The answers to the questionnaires circulated by the Commission revealed the yawning gap between the Bangladesh and Sheikh Mujib's secular polity. Soon the society began to take on the polity; it seems that Sheikh sensed the backlash. Towards the end of his rule he 'Islamized' his speeches by using terms and idioms which were peculiar to Muslim Bangladeshis only like Allah (the Almighty God), Inshah Allah (if Allah wishes), Bismillah (in the name of Allah), Tawba (penitence) and Iman (faith). As days passed on, Sheikh Mujib even dropped his usual word for valediction "Joy Bangla" (Glory to Bengal) and ended his speeches with Khuda Hafiz (May God protect you), the traditional Islamic phrase for bidding farewell. In his later-day speeches Sheikh Mujib also highlighted his efforts to establish cordial relations with the Muslim countries in the Middle East.

³⁵ Ali Riaz, *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh*. *op. cit.*

The Awami League regime was hardly prepared for the nation building and post independent task. It had to rebuild an economy immobilized by war and by its de-linking from institutions at the centre which had for 24 years run its finances, central banking, planning and foreign affairs. It had to cope with the overnight withdrawal of Pakistani businessmen who had dominated private industry, commerce, banking, insurance, inland waterways, shipping, foreign and regional trade. It faced an economy physically dislocated by war with 10 million refugees seeking immediate rehabilitation. Its communication network had been destroyed with bridges and rolling stock damaged power system down, ports blocked by sunken wrecks, all foreign trade disrupted, factories closed, inventories low and disruption in the planting of two successive crops. Some 100,000 or so weapons were in private hands at the time of liberation which severely strained the capacity of the new government to restore law and order.³⁶

The post-liberation Bangladesh government had proclaimed socialism as a declaratory principle of state policy, that it was presumed close to India and leaning to the world view of the more militant of the Third World countries, was not winning the new government the friendly impression in the Nixon administration. The US administration gave signals about its unhappiness with the drift of state policy in Bangladesh. This suggests that the slow disbursement of commodity aid by the western aid donors to Bangladesh was not for the reason of the low absorptive capacity of the country's economy but for the political perspectives of the concerned donors.³⁷

After Sheikh Mujib's government collapsed, soon Bangladesh joined the large club of Muslim states, having inserted Islam in the Constitution.

And the objective record shows that aid flows to Bangladesh had picked up in 1975 and that by August of 1975 Bangladesh had a full aid pipeline, fuller food stocks and a solid currency reserve position, had brought inflation under control and had a bumper food crop in the offing.³⁸

³⁶ Rehman Sobhan, *Bangladesh: Problems of Governance*. Konark Publishers PVT LTD. New Delhi. India. 1993

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Ibid

In the context of post-liberation Bangladesh where inflated expectations were juxtaposed against scarcity for the masses and conspicuous consumption for the few, the ruling party faced significant erosion in the massive public sympathy which brought it to power.³⁹

The government of Ziaur Rahman proceeded to give an Islamic cast to the educational system. The new Committee on Curricula and syllabi stated in one of their documents: Islam is a complete code of life, not just a sum of rituals. A Muslim has to live his personal, social, economic and international life in accordance with Islam is compulsory for all Muslim men and women. The Committee thus suggested a paper on Islamiat as a compulsory paper in all classes from I to VIII (with options to the students of minority communities to have similar papers on their religions) and as an elective paper in classes IX and X.⁴⁰ A proliferation of religious and semi religious functions such as *Milad*, *Urs* and *Sirat-un-Nabi* had been perceptible. These occasions also been used politically to make people conscious of their religious separateness which, they have been reminded, needed to be upheld more than ever in a secular state.⁴¹

The language movement of 1952 created the atmosphere for the flourishing of a new generation of poets, novelists and playwrights and essayists who were an entirely different breed from the older generations of Muslim Bengali litterateurs.⁴² Instead of using the imageries, symbols and myths from Urdu, Persian and Arabic sources as had been usual with their predecessors; this new group looked to the total heritage of the Bengali literature and the sons of the soil of East Bengal for themes and inspiration. It was a sort of renaissance in East Bengal-“the return of the Bengali Muslims to home”.

Side by side with this modern secular literature another type of publications flourished in East Bengal-the Bengali literature on orthodox Islam. The publishers specializing in these

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Ali Riaz. *God Willing: The politics of Islamism in Bangladesh. op. cit.*

⁴¹ M.Anisuzzaman. *op. cit*

⁴² Talukder Maniruzzaman: Bangladesh Politics: Secular and Islamic trends. In S.R. Chakravarty, Virendra Narain, Bangladesh. Vol.1. History and Culture, South Asia Studies series 12 (Ed.). South Asian Publishers, New Delhi. India. 1986.

books like Imadadia, Rahmania, Ashrafia, Nomania and Osmania did brisk business and kept Islam flowing underneath the thin and quite porous layer of secular politics.

The political orientations of this conscious and active group of people of Bangladesh, conducted a survey shows that the people having communist/secular-socialist orientation of different hues occupied about one sixth (16.09 %) of space and the activists subscribing to Islamic ideologies of various types (modernist, orthodox and fundamentalist) took a slightly larger extent (17.52 %) of the total ideological spectrum of the nation. The mainstream (65.34 %) was held by liberal democrats, who are generally Islamist in their orientation but would not resort to Islamic fanaticism excepting in critical times when the very existence of the nation was threatened.⁴³ This group was obviously holding the balance between the two ideologically extreme groups on the periphery of Bangladesh political arena.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), founded by the President Ziaur Rahman in 1979 developed fast as a populist party. Its nominee defeated the AL nominee in the presidential polls in November 1981 in a virtual straight contest by a large majority. The largest rival of the AL had to state the following about Islam in Bangladesh:

“Religious belief and love for religion are a great and imperishable characteristic of the Bangladeshi nation. The long mass struggle against the cruel and unscrupulous foreign rule and domination has given most sublime and tolerant character to and stabilized our religion. The vast majority of our people are followers Islam. The fact is well-reflected and manifest in our stable and liberal national life.”⁴⁴

The Islamic Democratic League (IDL) the party of orthodox Islam, stated in their manifesto: “One of our goals is to amend and improve upon the present constitution so that it can facilitate the establishment of just society in the light of social, economic and political goals enunciated in the Koran and Sunnah.”⁴⁵

⁴³ Talukder Maniruzzaman: Bangladesh Politics: Secular and Islamic trends. *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ Manifesto, Bangladesh Nationalist Party: August 1978, pp.3-4.

⁴⁵ Manifesto, Bangladesh Islamic Democratic League, n.d., p.3.

Ambivalence as a state of mind is usually regarded by social psychologists as “creative tension” favourable for innovation. The ambivalence of the modern Muslim intellectuals split between Islamic values, western ideas has not so far proved constructive, productive and innovative. The intellectual development of modernist Islam still remains stagnant in the grey area left behind by Mohammed Iqbal. Iqbal’s strategy of modernizing Islam by stripping ‘accidental’ parts of Islam from its ‘eternal’ and ‘universal’ aspects has not yet been developed further either in intellectual or practical political field.⁴⁶

As in other Muslim countries, frustration with the ‘immobilism’ and ineffectiveness of the modernist Islam led some of the people in Bangladesh cherishing Islamic values towards the direction of Islamic fundamentalism. This was not dramatically shown in the falling leadership of Azad, mouthpiece of Islamic modernism in the forties and fifties, and the increasing circulation of the daily Sangram and the weeklies, Sonar Bangla and Jahan-e-Nau, the standard bearers of the Islamic fundamentalism in Bangladesh.

Many social scientists argue that the process of modernization has its own logic and dynamics. The fundamentalist movements share in all Muslim countries is their identical social base for recruitment, the recently educated lower middle class, the conducted survey shows 84 percent of the party-elite of Jamaat were recruited from among small businessman, college professors, school teachers, agriculturist and lower grade service holders. Jamaat leaders claimed that approximately 90 percent of the members and associate members were from similar lower middle class backgrounds. The whole time workers of the Jamaat were given allowances according to lower middle class standards.⁴⁷

The size of the nascent educated lower middle class which provided the social base of Jamaat will continue to swell in Bangladesh. The class is likely to develop severe sense of deprivation and insecurity as they would lose the fierce competition with the entrenched educated middle and upper classes for jobs and other scarce resources. With

⁴⁶ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, Chicago. University of Chicago Press; Second Edition, 1979. pp. 212-34.

⁴⁷ Talukder Maniruzzaman; Bangladesh Politics: Secular and Islamic trends. *op. cit.*

numerous divisions and ineffectiveness in the communist camp, Jamaat's strength among the burgeoning lower middle classes is likely to increase.⁴⁸

The politics in Bangladesh have always been marked by strong populist streak, and that is one more significant aspect of Bangladesh's internal politics what results to an impact of international environment on Islam in the country. Our leaders have always tried to overcome the restraints of the organizations which they themselves created by generating direct mass support through populist styles and idioms. For example, Sheikh Mujib's pledge to "bring smile" to the face of "my people"; Ziaur Rahman's attempt to reach the people through canal digging.⁴⁹

Not only for petro-dollars but also for the consideration of national security and support in international forums would lead Bangladesh to look for support among the Muslim states. That was to result in the strengthening of the Islamists and thereby, sharpen ideological polarization within the country.

The majority of the people who sobered and sublimated by their experience of Pakistan and post-independence Bangladesh days do not want to endorse any revisionist, destabilizing programme. With their conservative, status-quo orientation, this middle - roaders do have Islam as one of their core values. It is the coalition among the mainstream, moderate Islamists, and the groups of traditional, modernist and fundamentalists Islamists that provided the bases of support for the regimes of Ziaur Rahman, Abdus Sattar, Khaleda Zia and reduced the influence of the AL, communist/socialist-secularist groups to one quarter of Bangladesh electorate.⁵⁰

All the measures taken by Ershad regime provided a final blow to the secular nature of the Bangladesh state and also accorded religion a definite space in the political discourse

⁴⁸ Johnson, Dale L.. 'The State as an Expression of Class Relations'. In Dale L. Johnson, *Middle Classes in Dependent Countries*. Sage Publications, London. 1985.

⁴⁹ Ali Riaz, *State, Class and Military Rule: Political Economy of Martial Law in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Nadi New Press, 1994.

⁵⁰ Talukder Maniruzzaman, *op. cit*

of Bangladesh. More significant consequences are the fundamental transformation of the physiognomy of Bangladesh capitalism and creation of a new social class, a class of lumpen capitalists.

The upsurge/emergence of the new Islamized elite

Zia's strategy was to use public resources and patronage to build up an indigenous capitalist class in co-existence with a large public sector (similar like pursued by the Ayub's regime in the 1960's). This strategy was carried over to the Ershad regime but with the difference that the regime moved to dismantle the public sector by disinvesting in a quite indiscriminate manner a large chunk of public assets. Under the strategy of developing a Bangladeshi entrepreneurial and the new order of the pursuit of wealth were encouraged. The state built up an indigenous wealth seeking class. To this extent, the Zia-Ershad regime moved to end the contradiction within the state left by the legacy of the liberation war. Zia opted to build a state for men of property as was sought by the original middle class supporters of Bengali Nationalism, this class had appeared as well regarded professionals, civil servants and senior officers of the armed forces were inducted as members of Zia's cabinet.⁵¹

The class was being built up as part of a conscious motive of state policy. Most of this new class coming from modest backgrounds graduated under the Zia regime into an affluent elite whose extravagant life styles built on aid and borrowed money surpassed those of their Pakistani forebears who had built up their fortunes over decades of productive enterprise. The Zia era saw the emergence of this new class of safari-suited business elite who traveled to and from Bangkok and Singapore and consumed imported luxuries to flaunt their wealth.⁵²

They used the state as their prized possession and received extensive protection and patronage. But as they accumulated vast sums of money, the legal measures that

⁵¹ Rehman Sobhan. *op. cit*

⁵² Ibid

benefited them became serious impediments in their growth. Hence they began to put pressure on the regime to rescind restriction on further growth of capital.

Much of this wealth has been newly acquired from construction contracts, indenters' commissions derived from aid projects as well as from indiscriminate and politically motivated access to DFI funds and also through illegal means that is corruption, smuggling. The astronomical debt default in the 1980's was a critical factor in the development of a new capitalist class out of the mud of a modest middle class.⁵³

This new class had the good sense to realize that an unrepresentative military regime could not provide a permanent basis for ruling Bangladesh. They felt the need for a regime deriving its power from the armed forces but wearing civilian clothes what followed with the an image of hard work, personal integrity and a willingness to go down and mix with the people. The future of the new class and the eminence of the armed forces were feeling threatened by a return to democratic politics, so there was a need of forming a political party which could challenge the democratic politics in Bangladesh.

The use of patronage and corruption of the body politic thus became the central dynamic of this new party. To encourage people to betray their long standing political loyalties contributed to a debasement of the national political culture that demanded a wholesale corruption of the body politic. Ziaur Rahman, himself remained uncorrupted, but saw corruption as a political weapon to bend people to his will. The dynamic of this system came from the unlimited access to foreign aid enjoyed in Bangladesh. It was aid which built up the new business elite and provided the patronage which held the ruling party together.⁵⁴

This progressive degeneration in the political culture of Bangladesh had a fatal effect on the character of governance, in Bangladesh. Under Ershad regime, the entire cabinet and most members of the Jatyo Party were motivated to join politics with the single minded-

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Ibid

goal of holding public office and using state power to accumulate wealth. The system of governance in Bangladesh degenerated into a form of functional anarchy, where efficiency and resource mobilization were substituted by a dependence on the largess and direction of the donors.⁵⁵

It was increasingly felt that a new generation of Bangladeshis was coming of age nurtured in the belief that politics was about the use of violence and money to earn more money. Civil society seemed to have itself taken a vacation. Most members of the educated classes took refuge in blaming the weakness of the political opposition thereby salvaging their conscience from expressing a position on the state of the polity. Whilst the citizens stayed home preoccupied with their personal affairs the degeneration of civil society continued as one excess in governance followed on another.

To give Zia's party strength and to consolidate even outside the ruling party, all anti-Awami League forces demanded the resurrection of the anti-liberation forces. These revived forces not only provided an important plank in the BNP but emerged in other areas of civil society, in politics, administration, academic and professional life and used the cover of the Zia regime to rehabilitate themselves in public life.

The Ershad era marked the extreme degeneration of a political order whose foundation were set in the 1970's. Whilst Ershad continued the Zia tradition of building an anti-progressive coalition through the resources of the cantonment and state, he made himself the centre of the corrosion of the state rather than his political party. He became not only the principal source of patronage and corruption but also its principal beneficiary. The lack of accountability in a system of governance and misuse of aid resources led to the increase in donor intervention in the direction and management of the economy.

The nature of state and social structure of Bangladesh after 1975, we can say that the course followed by the military-bureaucratic regime after the coup d'etat, consolidated the power and authority of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy as the central institution

⁵⁵ Ibid

within the state; and initiated a process of dependent capitalist development beneficial to a small segment of the society who began to emerge under the previous regime. Furthermore, the capitalist development model, though generated a new class of capitalists, failed to unleash the productivity usually associated with capitalism because the new capitalists of Bangladesh were least interested in profit maximization through productive investments in various sectors of economy. Instead, they relied upon extra-economic methods of accumulation, i.e. theft, plunder and embezzlement (for the last three years at a row, Bangladesh has been ranked the most corrupt country in the world by the Transparency International Survey of corruption perceptions⁵⁶). They are tied in an uneven relationship with the dispensers of public resources, i.e. bureaucracy, and are dependent upon their largesse making the latter more powerful and influential. Pursuance of a dependent capitalist model further integrated the country with the world capitalist economy, primarily as an aid-dependent nation.

During the 1991 general elections reflect the extent of influence of Islamist idioms on the political discourse. Slogans by the political parties attempted to demonstrate their indomitable faith in Islam. For example, BNP supporters chanted, *La ilaha illallah, dhaner shishe Bismillah* (There is no God but Allah, vote for paddy-sheaf saying God the merciful); Awami League supporters came up with the slogan *La ilaha illallah, naukar malik tui Allah* (There is no God but Allah, the boat belongs to Allah); and the Jamaat supporters' slogan was *Vote diley pallay, khushi hobe Allah* (Allah will be pleased with you if you vote for the scale).⁵⁷

It appears to be the fact that all that held us together in 1971 have become divided today, whether with or without justification. Bangladesh now looks back to the days when the unity and determination of its people worked wonders. Today it remains a deeply fragmented nation-fragmentation to which the politics of identity continues to contribute.

⁵⁶ Charulata Hogg, "Bangladesh: Unconvincing Crackdown." *The World Today*, Vol.62, no.7, July 2006
And also see Rounaq Jahan. "Bangladesh in 2003: Vibrant Democracy or Destructive Politics?", *Asian Survey*, Vol.44, No-1, Jan-Feb. 2004

⁵⁷ Ali Riaz. *God willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh. op. cit.*

Chapter Four

Bangladesh Polity: Coups and Islam

Why the military interventions took place in Bangladesh is a significant issue as it is in Pakistan, where civilian failures allegedly invited these in praetorian and corporatist forms.

Military intervention in politics has been increased all over the Third World, but it seems to be endemic in four regions: Latin America, South and South-East Asia, Middle East and South Saharan Africa.

The reasons for military intervention are having three strands of thought reflecting three sets of crucial variables. The first is related to the capability of the military elite, which is associated with the very nature of organization of the armed forces. The organizational features provide them with discipline and cohesion, hierarchy and centralized command and unity both at the decision-making and execution levels which enable the military elite to take over political power promptly if they decide to act. The second strand is related to the corporate interest of the armed forces. Any threat to their corporate interest may propel them to move and capture political power. The third one refers to weaknesses of the political system such as fragile political institutions and chronic instability, lack of consensual leadership and legitimacy, power vacuum and low level of political culture, which is in fact, provide occasions for intervention to the military elite.¹

The armed forces in the Third world enjoy three significant political advantages over civilian organizations: a) a marked superiority in organization; b) a highly emotionalized symbolic status and c) a monopoly of most modern and lethal weapons.²

The party organizations in the Third World are less well-knit, most often fragmented and divided from within. Moreover, the party organizations became affected more easily by factional strife, regional cliques and ideological cleavages and thus lose much of their effectiveness. In the face of grave economic crises, social and political instability, which appear most often "simultaneously and with overpowering immediacy" in these

¹ Emajuddin Ahamed, *Military Rule and the Myth of Democracy*. The University Press Limited, Dhaka. Bangladesh. 1988.

² S.E.Finer. *The Man on Horseback: The Role of Military in Politics*. Pall Mall Press. London, 1962.

underdeveloped/developing (soft) states. The political elite falter and fumble and ultimately fail.³

The armed forces are deeply concerned with the protection and enhancement of their interests, and their interests centre around such issues as adequate budgetary support, autonomy in managing their internal affairs, safeguarding their interests in the face of encroachment from rival institutions, continuity of the institution, further strengthening it and so on. These may be identified as the corporate interest of the military. Corporate grievances are therefore concerned with the position and resources standing of the armed forces.⁴ *William R. Thompson* refers to the varying political cultures that account for intervention of the armed forces.

It has been found in the earlier phases of European continental armies that the military elite pursue their corporate interest with great tenacity, in fact the most common and pervasive interventionist motive is closely related to this.⁵

Since the armed forces identify themselves with the nation, and since the nations honour them, sovereignty and power reside with and within the armed forces, the military elite think that what is good for them is good for the nation. The personal interests of the military such as desire for promotion, political ambition and fear of dismissal are also important motivating factors in a significant number of coups.⁶ It is also noticed in Africa that organization conflict inside the army may also cause a coup.

Adequate budgetary support constitutes one of the major corporate interests of the military. That is why when the civilian governments decide to decrease defense expenditure or refuse to increase it at the military's insistence, the military elite get emotionally involved and tend to think in terms of taking over. The military may develop

³ Lucian W. Pye, *Aspects of Political Development*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1966. p-63

⁴ William R. Thompson, *The Grievances of Military Coup-Makers*. Sage Professional Papers in Comparative Politics, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, 1973

⁵ Eric A. Nordlinger, "Soldiers in Mufti: The Impact of Military Rule Upon Economic and Social Change in the Non-Western States". *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 64 .Dec. 1970.

⁶ S.Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule in Africa*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976. pp-17-22.

elaborate economic networks as in civilian section as in Pakistan, as per *Ayesha Siddiqa's* book on military economy.⁷

While the civilian regime's refusals or failures to meet the budgetary expectations of the armed forces make the military elite highly irritated, the civilian interference in the internal affairs of the armed forces generates strong interventional motives. As a well-knit and cohesive organization of unique nature, the military is very sensitive to its autonomous status and position. It wants to shape its own educational and training programmes, regulate promotions and placement of officials in its own ways and formulate its own defense strategies. Civilian interferences, the military elite feel, lower the professional competence and self-image of the officers, distorts the hierarchy, blurs the identity of the military, and ultimately weakens their power to safeguard the corporate interest. That is why the military elite take any kind of interference very seriously and tend to react violently.

The armed forces are so much sensitive to their autonomous position that they get infuriated and move to act even against the military regime if it interferes and acts in high-handed manner against the officers.

While interference in the internal affairs of the armed forces generates a crisis situation, creation of a functional rival to the military grossly exacerbates it. The creation of a functional rival in the form of a people's militia or security force or guard regiment is taken as "a stinging insult" by the military elite for several reasons: a) it tends to take away the military's monopolistic control over the means of coercion, b) it may weaken the military's ability to defend the corporate interest since the rival may act as a countervailing force, c) it represents a clear signal to the military that the armed forces are replaceable.⁸

⁷ Ayesha Siddiqa, *Military Inc: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*. Pluto Press, London, 2007.

⁸ E.A. Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Government*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J; Prentice-Hall, 1977. p-75

The military generally support the kind of civilian regimes which are drawn from similar social classes, and overthrow those that are different from and hostile to their social classes. Class interest therefore is one of the several factors which in conjunction with others motivate the military to intervene. There are however two types of civilian regimes which are more prone to military intervention: First, those regimes which consist mainly of traditional aristocratic elements; Second, such regimes whose primary support comes from the lower classes, and those that might come to power with the support of political workers and peasants.⁹ Traditional regimes based on aristocratic elements such as the royalty, nobility based on land interest, are more to prone to military coup especially if these are associated with democratic reforms.

Threat to middle class interests comes both from the top and bottom. The middle class interests may be affected both by the feudal interest and the highly politicized workers and peasants. That is why the military in the Third World countries have persistently acted against the traditional regimes and those which draw their support from the politicized workers and peasants. The military elite because of their training, orientation and political attitudes, generally suspect radical politics, and the intrusion of politicized workers and peasants into politics tends to radicalize it more and more.

The military generally intervene before the national elections or immediately after the elections when they see that the pace of politicization is alarmingly high.¹⁰

While the organizational characteristics of the military provide the military elite with capability, it is their corporate interests which generate strong interventionist motives, and performance failures of the civil authorities provide the military elite suitable occasions. Performance failures are however related with societal phenomena which are equally significant for the explanation of military intervention. According to *Samuel P. Huntington*, "The most important causes of military intervention in politics are not

⁹ Ibid. p-79

¹⁰ Edwin Lieuwen, *Generals vs. Presidents: Neo-Militarism in Latin America*. New York: Praeger. 1964. p-61.

military but political and reflect not the social and organizational characteristics of the military establishment but the political and institutional structure of the society.”¹¹

In such a society described by him as “Praetorian Society”, each group employs means which reflect its peculiar nature and capabilities such as wealthy bribe, student riot, workers strike, mobs demonstrate, and the military coup.¹²

According to him, the reason that leads to military intervention “lies not in the nature of the group but in the structure of the society. In particular they lie in the absence or weakness of effective political institutions.”¹³

Samuel Finer states that the various degrees of military intervention are directly and negatively related to the nature of the society’s “Political Culture”. According to him, the level of political culture is considered high when the political formula justifying the civil authorities’ right to rule is widely accepted, political system’s civil procedures and organs are widely recognized as worthy of authority and people’s participation and loyalty to the political institutions are intense and widespread.¹⁴

The performance failures or regime vulnerability have however several dimensions such as illegal or unconstitutional actions of the political elite, their responsibility for economic mismanagement, seething discontent of the politically relevant sections of the population, disorder and violence at the social level. The military have intervened to set things right, though they have always rationalized the coups in the name of justice, national honour and national interest. Law and order situation and demand policing by the military make the civil authorities totally dependent on the military, and in almost all cases performance failures make these regimes highly unpopular and indicate loss of legitimacy to the politically relevant sections of population. The military take advantage of this kind of situations while staging coups, and staging a coup d’etat is after all a very calculated move. The political elite in the new states are not free from the charges of corruption, abuse of power and illegal extortion; these charges are always made against

¹¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*. Yale University Press, New Haven. 1968. p-194

¹² Ibid., p-196

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ S E.Finer. *op. cit.*, pp-77-79.

the civil authorities to justify military coups. The military elite also know that, once in power, they themselves feel tempted to use political power and office for their private gain. According to *Edwin Lieuwen*, almost inevitably military dictatorship led to corruption.¹⁵

Most of the military interventions have taken place during periods of economic decline or stagnation rather than at times of prosperous economy. Economic stagnation or inflation tends to affect the salaried, fixed income middle class groups and in fact these groups are the politically relevant groups in these societies. The military have intervened many times to protect the interests of these groups.

Some times the level of violence and disorder goes so high that the law enforcing agencies fail, and the government is forced to deploy armed forces to quell disturbances. The deployment of armed forces for preventing riots or handling labor strikes meeting students' unrest or large scale violence leads to serious consequences: a) increasing dependence of civilian regimes on the military; b) the military become fully aware of the weaknesses of the regime; c) successful handling of the crisis situations makes the military more and more confident and d) it makes the military sensitive to political power. Consequently, disorder and violence, if they become serious and endemic, present the military elite interventionist occasions.

Military interventions generally take place when the civilian regimes suffer from legitimacy deflations. Loss of legitimacy in the eyes of society occur when the civilian regimes fail to check disorder and violence in society, when its policies lead to economic stagnation or decline, and when the civil authorities become associated with large scale corruptions or when they resort to illegal or unconstitutional means with a view to perpetuating their stay in power or strengthening their power bases. Legitimacy deflation of a regime becomes obvious when a large section of the politically relevant population or a major portion of the politicized groups in the society becomes highly dissatisfied

¹⁵ Edwin Lieuwen; "Militarism and Politics in Latin America" in John. A. Johnson., *The Role of Military in Underdeveloped Countries* (Ed.). Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1962. p.158.

with the regime. All these suggest that, the military, on the eve of intervention in politics, must be popular to a section of the society.

But the military explanations of military intervention have some serious drawbacks. It would be impossible to find the real answer without the proper understanding of the genealogical origins of the military as well as its relationship with the civil society.

Political explanations have to do with both the inadequacy of political structures and the behaviour of political actors. *Huntington* (1968) can be considered the best representative those who emphasize political factors as paramount in understanding military interventionism.¹⁶ His central argument is that political systems with low level of institutionalization and high levels of participation, which Huntington called praetorian society, are particularly vulnerable to military interventions. In the societies where political institutions are not developed enough to reflect and contain the needs and aspirations of the masses, social conflict escalates to the extent that a threat to the social order looms large. In a situation like this the legitimacy of the existing government declines making it a weak, inefficient and ineffective entity in the eyes of the masses. When the military takes a position to oppose the government, the downfall of the government becomes unavoidable. This explanation may claim success in describing situations leading to a military coup d'etat, but still lacks the merit of analyzing the social origins of military rule.

Radical Latin American scholars have developed “the bureaucratic authoritarian model” to explain both military intervention and what follows it. The concept is introduced by *Guillermo A.O'Donnell* (1973) based on his interpretation of Latin American political economy. Bureaucratic Authoritarianism is a type of state that emerges in certain late industrialized countries as a response to the political and economic crises. The political system is seen to pass from a populist phase in which multi-class coalition of urban and industrial interests, including the working class, use the state to promote industrialization around consumer goods, to a bureaucratic authoritarian phase in which the coalition

¹⁶ Samuel P. Huntington. *op. cit*

consists of high level military and technocrats working with foreign capital. Electoral competition and popular participation are then suppressed, and public policy concerns with promoting advanced industrialization. Such a process comes about because the market dictates a 'deepening' of industrialization through the domestic manufacture of intermediate and capital goods through highly capitalized enterprises, often affiliated to multinational corporations. The political implication of such a process is that since a mass electorate is unlikely to vote for a package of policies which will reduce living standards in the immediate future, only an authoritarian government will be able to impose it and, in the absence of traditional elites enjoying any legitimacy, or coercive power, only a military takeover can ensure that capitalist development takes precedence over popular demands.¹⁷

In the post-World War II era, developing countries have experienced varying levels of military intervention and erosion of democracy and the military intervention through coups has largely been taken place in African, Asian and Latin American states. In these countries, in comparison to the developed countries, the armed forces are more likely than not to be among the potential contenders for political power. Military intervention is characteristically associated with the less developed countries which are sometimes referred to as 'praetorian societies'¹⁸ or praetorian civil-military type, characterised by ineffective political leadership and lack of instruments and structures to channelise political support. A praetorian regime is dominated by the military, or by a coalition of the military and the bureaucracy, or a coalition of military, civilian politicians, and technocratic groups. The military elites uniformed or non-uniformed, in a praetorian regime innovates political structures and implement policies in order to dominate the regime. The key civilian institutions are very few and narrowly based and are not strong enough to assert control over the armed forces. A crisis of hegemony decays political institutionalisation. Political power and resources are dispersed among numerous groups in praetorian polities, and political parties are usually identified with particular social forces rather than as aggregating the interests of a broad range of groups. Governments

¹⁷ Ali Riaz, *State, Class and Military Rule: Political Economy of Martial Law in Bangladesh*. *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Samuel P. Huntington. *op. cit.*

tend to be formed by a coalition of various interest groups. If at any time the military perceives the regime as inconvenient and failed to give the due to interest groups and military, it can intervene to bring in a regime that is more amenable. This praetorian model of civil military relations largely has seen or can be noted in weak regimes or unstable states of South Asia.¹⁹

The broad-based societal consensus accords legitimacy to the civilian authorities and the organizational alacrity strengthens political institutions. The armed forces, under the circumstances, remain confined to their prescribed role and thus become professionalized in the art of defending the country and not ruling over it; this way military intervention can be prevented in a country.

Politicization of the armed forces

If we look at the history of Bangladesh, we find that the military elite not only assumed a political role in Bangladesh, but they also claim that they should have a right to do so. Before the formal assumption of power in March 1982, major General Ershad demanded that the military in Bangladesh should be accorded a constitutional role to ensure the protection of the political system.²⁰

In the British colonial period, for the supreme purpose of securing and perpetuating colonial interests in India, the British army policy had been contrived to capitalize on the existing religious antagonisms between the religious minorities through its policy of “divide and rule”.²¹

¹⁹ Veena Kukreja, *Civil-Military Relations in South Asia: Pakistan, Bangladesh and India*. Sage Publications, New Delhi, India, 1991.

²⁰ New York Times, 14th November 1981 And also see Emajuddin Ahamed, *op. cit.*

²¹ C.H. Philip, *The Evolution of India and Pakistan*. London: Oxford University Press, 1962. p. 508.

In the context of the conservative background of the Indian Officers, they as expected, accepted the traditional role of army as defined for them by the colonial government, and thus set the pattern in South Asia with their anti-people and anti-political orientation.²²

Unlike those of the western countries, where the armed forces played their role primarily for the purpose of defense from external aggression, the British Indian Army was organized with a view mainly to maintaining law and order and ensuring internal security, and thus promoting colonial interests.

This role of the British Indian Army was taken by people differently in different regions in India. In Bengal, this was highly resented by the people. This sentiment was due partly to the reactions of the Bengali's to an alien rule, and partly to their "modern consciousness" generated in the wake of profound changes brought about by British in the early 19th century. Of all the regions in the sub-continent, it was Bengal again which underwent more hardships and oppression under an alien rule because of its longer acquaintance with its. It was Bengal again which acquired much earlier a modern consciousness through agrarian, technical, educational and intellectual changes brought about by the British India. In the early 19th century, Bengal became animated with an upsurge of new ideas which can be conveniently termed nationalistic.²³

In the Pakistan phase, due to the origin of the officers in the landowning class, their inheritance of the ethos and organizational framework of the British Indian Army, and above all, "their adherence to sometimes conflicting ideologies" of feudalism and professional excellence, the armed forces in Pakistan remained susceptible toward maintaining internal order rather than becoming an institution primarily for the purpose of defense from external aggression. The new military officers continued to be recruited from the same bases, which were physically and culturally distanced from the civilian sectors, having a sense of being a part and yet apart from the society in which they lived.

²² Emajuddin Ahamed, *Military Rule and the Myth of Democracy*. The University Press Limited, Dhaka. Bangladesh, 1988.

²³ Ibid

This duality in attitudes of the soldiers towards their society and their professional expertise created “ambivalence” in their attitude towards the political institutions in Pakistan. After independence, the organization of the armed forces in India, the systems of their training and recruitment underwent profound changes, but in Pakistan the same tradition continued.²⁴

Moreover, certain policy measures of the ruling elite in Pakistan, which were adopted right from the beginning, had the effects of politicizing the armed personnel from Bangladesh.

Immediately after the emergence of Pakistan its army was preoccupied with its own organization. For a time it remained content with the policies of the ruling elite, since the military were assured of their privileged status in respect of pay and other perquisites. Furthermore, having its roots firmly planted in the landed aristocracy, the military also felt a kind of class affinity with the civilian rulers. Pakistan’s strong “anti-Indian” foreign policy, coupled with a “stand-off” at the first Kashmir conflict of 1948, stalemate with India on the issues of canal water and evacuee property had effect of making the Pakistan Army strongly “anti-India” in nature from the beginning. That ultimately drove it much closer to the US which had so long been seeking a reliable ally in South Asia within the framework of its global strategy of containing communism. Acquiring a sophisticated war technology from the US, enhanced not only its striking power but also its bargaining strength, and it began to penetrate the civilian government of Pakistan. When in 1954 effective political power was assumed by the bureaucratic elite, the generals found it most suitable to enter the political area openly.

Most of the Bengali military officers, who played crucial roles in taking over political power in Bangladesh in the 1970’s, were recruited during this period and were trained and socialized under the shadow of Ayub Khan’s martial law.²⁵

²⁴ Stephen P. Cohen. *The Indian Army: Its Contribution to the Development of a Nation*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971. pp-32-36

²⁵ Lawrence Ziring. *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan 1958-1969*. Syracuse University Press. Syracuse, 1971.

This tradition continued in Bangladesh, and in the early 1970's the Awami League regime called the armed forces into action several times despite its effort to make the party channel of control and direction and to strengthen the political infra-structure at the administrative level.²⁶

Some of the freedom fighters gave up conventional military ideas so much so that after independence they became determined to transform the Bangladesh armed forces into a kind of "production oriented army" on the model of the Chinese People's Army. Colonel Taher and Colonel Ziauddin, the best known advocates of this view and two famous war heroes joined ultimately the underground wing of the Jatiya Samajtrantik Dal (JSD) and the Purba Bangla Sarbahara Party (East Bengal Communist Party) respectively and organized their military wings. These freedom fighters wanted not only to reorganize the armed forces but also the society on an egalitarian basis so that the independence earned with so much blood and sacrifices becomes meaningful to the millions of people.²⁷

In sum , the Bangladesh Army which was the direct descendant of the British Indian and Pakistan Army, inherited not only the institutional framework of their predecessors but also their ethos, especially their orientation against the politics of civilians and at the same time their consciousness of political power.

In Bangladesh-The military and Islam go hand in hand

Since independence, Bangladesh has been dominated by either direct military rule or martial law or military rule in civilian mask for at least 15 years. It experienced four successful and at least 27 abortive coups d'etat. The army leadership opted to enlist the support of the Islamic ideological forces and the business interests to perpetuate their hold over power. Without any political skill to mobilize masses and being itself the one

²⁶ Zillur R. Khan, "Politicization of the Bangladesh Military: A Response to Perceived Shortcomings of Civilian Government". *Asian Survey*. Vol. 21. No. 5, May, 1981.

²⁷ Major Rafiqul Islam, *Ekti Phoolke Bachabo Boley (To Save a Flower)*. Dhaka University Press Ltd., Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1983.

pitted against the political class, the easiest way for the army to reach the masses was through the Islamists groups.

Organization provides the armed forces with discipline and cohesion, hierarchy and centralized command, and the institutional positions give them power. It is no wonder therefore that the military elite in a post-colonial state like Bangladesh become a dominant force. The armed forces in Bangladesh however were not well-knit at the beginning and thus could not emerge as a decisive factor in politics in the early years.

Lack of commitment to corporate interests

Those officers, who took part in the Liberation War, were offered seniority and treated differently. This differential treatment caused enough internal conflicts among the freedom fighters and the repatriates. The repatriates regarded most of the freedom fighters as basically secularists, socialists and pro-Indian while the freedom fighters stereotyped the repatriates as obscurantist's, opportunists and pro-Pakistani's.²⁸

The consequent acrimony between the two groups very badly affected the morale of the military officers, accelerated the process of polarization of the two, and strained the command structure of the defense services. The armed force in Bangladesh was divided at the initial stage even in terms of ideology. The repatriates retained much of the conservative outlook that characterized the armed forces in Pakistan. Since they did not undergo the experience of the Liberation War they felt shaky, but the bulk of the freedom fighters became highly politicized and somewhat radical in their views.

While the armed forces could not take any advantage of their organizational strength, they could very well ascertain that their corporate interests were not safe in the hands of the Awami League regime, and thus they remained dissatisfied with the government. First of all, the military elite felt that the Awami League Government had not been deeply interested in the development of defense services. The military elite resented the fact that

²⁸ Zillur Rahman Khan, *Leadership Crisis in Bangladesh*. Dhaka University Press Ltd., 1984. pp-225-226

the government did not take any speedy and effective measures for reconstruction of the training institutes and cantonments which were destroyed in the Liberation war, and consequently the defense services remained poorly equipped. Second, the revenue expenditure incurred on defense services was not only minimal but it was gradually reduced. In 1974-75 budget the revenue expenditure on defense came down to 15 % from 1973-74's budget allocation of 16 %.²⁹ Third, the establishment of a new militia-the Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini (National Security Force) which was organized under the direction of the Prime Minister's office and attached to the Awami League to provide support to the government in meeting serious situations-appeared as a parallel organization, and the government seemed to be more interested in its growth and development. The military elite highly disliked and offended by their move because it was symbolic of the fact that the regular armed forces were replaceable.

Moreover, most of the groups in the defense services in Bangladesh shared a common anti-Indian orientation for several reasons, and this anti-Indian feeling became heightened when it appeared to them that the close linkage of the Awami League regime with India was against their corporate interest. This anti-Indian feeling gradually developed into an anti-Mujib feeling because of Sheikh Mujib's pro-Indian foreign policy.³⁰

The armed forces regained their cohesion and unity and also became conscious of their corporate interest which, they believed, were not secure in the hands of the political elite. Thus the armed forces emerged as the ruling elite in Bangladesh in 1975, first, through the bloody coup of 15th August and finally by throwing away the slender parliamentary facade which hung loose from 15th August to 3rd November 1975.

Moreover, the support rendered to the Awami League during the Liberation War by the pro-Moscow National Awami Party (NAP) and pro-Moscow Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and a large number of recruits of the Mukti-Bahini from the radical elements had the effect of further radicalization. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman coming back

²⁹ Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Finance, *Budget Estimates 1975-76*. Dhaka. 1975

³⁰ Emajuddin Ahamed, *op. cit.*

from Pakistan also realized that neither the objective realities nor the popular mood would allow his government a chance to re-instate the old economic order. He said that,

*“One thing is clear to me: to give our people a fair deal Bangladesh would have to find its way to socialist reconstruction.”*³¹

While the exigency of circumstances and not the ideological commitment forced the Awami-League leadership to accept socialism and thereby nationalize the big industries, banks and insurance companies, the inability of the party to manage nationalized sector became pronounced, and the ultimate result was a large-scale confusion in the spheres of management. Being a bourgeois party, the Awami League had neither trained cadres nor could it develop them within a short period. The Awami League regime, however, despite its political approach and its use of party channels of control and direction and its massive popularity, failed to handle the problems of increasingly grave economic crises, social and political instability, and security and order in the country. As its failure became manifest, the regime began to turn to the civil and military bureaucrats who, through better performances, came to the forefront in the early days of 1975.

As the economy was on the verge of collapse by the middle of 1974 due to the sharp decline of production, large-scale smuggling, natural disaster, and the government desperately needed foreign aid from the Western and oil-rich Middle eastern countries, it decided to modify its socialist programme.

Factional Awami league and concentration of power

The real threat to political and social stability came from the radical forces. They attempted to bring about a “second revolution” in Bangladesh through an armed struggle. There were several radical revolutionary parties in Bangladesh, and most of these parties

³¹ Quoted in Ali Riaz. *State, Class and Military Rule: Political Economy of Martial Law in Bangladesh. op. cit.*

had been working as underground organizations during the Ayub era. These Parties argued that the Bangladesh Revolution of 1971 was an unfinished one.

Soon afterwards, the mid-level Awami League leaders also became locked into internecine quarrels. Conflict arose between the faction led by Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni, a nephew of Sheikh Mujib on the one hand and another faction led by Tofail Ahmed, political secretary of the Prime Minister and Abdur Razzaq, organizing secretary of the Awami League, on the other, Sheikh Moni organized a youth front, Jubo League, and Tofail Ahmed and Abdur Razzaq established their hold over the students League.

The top leaders also became involved in the controversy. One group, led by Finance Minister Tajuddin Ahmed, was opposed to acceptance of any foreign aid from the western powers and wanted to introduce socialist strategy of economic transformation. Another group led by, Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed, known for his pro-American policy, advocated for a mixed economy. When the economic situation became critical, Sheikh Mujib sided with the rightist group. The extent of factionalism can be realized from the fact that on 7th July 1974 six ministers and three state ministers, belonging to Tajuddin group resigned from the cabinet. Some time later Tajuddin Ahmed was also asked to resign.³²

The growing economic crisis, the increasingly violent role of the radical political parties, and above all, the ineffectiveness of the Awami League due to factional strife and the failure of the alliance to contain “violence and deteriorating law and order situation” made Sheikh Mujib more intolerant and led him to rely more and more on civil and military bureaucracy.

Revolutionary forces can be effectively confronted only by ideological clarity at the political level and by governmental performances at the societal level. The Awami League regime however failed on both counts: its political ideology of Mujib-bad (Mujibism), which was initiated to counteract the radical forces, was neither intellectually refreshing nor politically mobilizing; the level of its performance, especially after the

³² Emajuddin Ahamed. *op. cit.*

famine of 1974, fell much below expectations. Naturally for survival, the regime had to resort to repressive measures, and the armed forces, both the regular and Para-military bodies, became its handy instruments.

When the repressive measures proved counterproductive, the regime became more and more authoritarian and adopted policies of centralization of powers on the one hand and denial of political rights, on the other. The government declared a state of emergency on 28th December 1974 and suspended the fundamental rights granted by the constitution for an indefinite period. The emergency provided for special powers of arrest, curtailed the powers of the judiciary and muzzled the press. All political meetings and demonstrations were banned.³³

The constitution was amended to provide for a Presidential form of Government. The amendment bill was passed in an amazingly short period of half an hour, without debate. Sheikh Mujib was vested with maximum executive powers and authorized to declare Bangladesh a one-party state. Later on Sheikh Mujib closed down all but four newspapers, two in English and two in Bengali, created special courts and tribunals directly responsible to him, and on 7th June, 1975, founded the single National Party, the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL).³⁴

Personal motivating factors and August Coup

The precipitating factor of military intervention was the personal grievances and revenge of the coup leaders, some of whom had been dismissed by Sheikh Mujib. The pre-dawn bloody coup, which was staged in the early hours of 15th August 1975 and eliminated almost every member of Mujib's family, was masterminded by three majors who had developed bitter personal enmity against Sheikh Mujib.³⁵

³³ Marcus Franda, *Bangladesh; The First Decade*. New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1982

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Ibid. pp-50-57.

The August Coup, which killed Sheikh Mujib and toppled his government, was an outcome of a year long conspiracy hatched by a number of right wing Awami League leaders and some military officers with the knowledge of the CIA.³⁶

If authoritarianism fails to provide a solution to the crises faced by the ruling class and enhance the ability of the state to promote stable and expanded reproduction, then it is highly probable that the military will overtly seize state power. The military comes into action 'publicly' only when reorganization of the power-bloc and economy becomes necessary to maintain the dominant mode of production. The need for reorganization of 'vast state bureaucracies', 'organs of political order i.e. political parties, trade unions and other civil organization' and capitalist economy as a whole prompt the promulgation of martial law.³⁷

The consensus that was attempted through the state apparatus appeared as an imposed ideology. Failure to extract consent from the subordinate classes moved the ruling class towards domination and coercion. Such an inclination towards coercion made possible the preeminence of the military.

Another report suggests that Major General Zia (later president) attempted, even before the August coup, to impose martial law in Bangladesh, and the plan received enthusiastic support from David Boster, the US ambassador in Dhaka.³⁸

The most coups are internally generated by local cleavages and power conflicts, but external encouragement or discouragement becomes crucial to their success or failure. In Bangladesh, American assistance has been of crucial importance to the success of the post-Mujib regimes, and the August Coup became a turning point in the development of a warm Bangladesh-US relations.

³⁶ Lawrence Lifschultz, *Bangladesh: The Unfinished Revolution*. London: Zed Press. 1979. pp-85-88.

³⁷ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections From Prison Notebooks*. New York: International General. 1971.

³⁸ Sukharanjan Das Gupta. *Mid-Night Massacre in Dhaka*. New Delhi, India 1978, pp. 55-56

Sheikh Mujib's pro-Soviet and pro-Indian foreign policy and his government's policy of less and less spending for the armed forces, and especially his interest in developing the Jatiya Rakkkhi Bahini as a parallel organization had alienated the armed forces.

The modification of Awami League's socialistic programmes alienated a large number of radical elements and the imposition of a one party system alienated the liberals. Naturally, the Awami League, with its apparently strong organizational base, became affected by factionalism, and ultimately fragmented. Thus the political leaders could neither handle the problems of economic crisis that emerged in 1973, nor could they check large scale corruption among their ranks nor could they provide a sense of direction to the nation.

In the face of a grim revolutionary movement launched by the radical political parties, economic collapse and widespread violence, the Awami League regime had to turn to the armed forces. As the internal threat mounted and was successfully managed by the armed forces, they could feel that their services were indispensable. The increasingly active participation of the armed forces in civil administration made them aware of the weaknesses of the regime.

The three coup leaders, in close collaboration with a very small number of their colleagues (20 to 25 majors and captains) and with the help of two battalions of armoured corps and supported by one regiment, staged the pre-dawn coup on 15th August, 1975; they brutally killed Sheikh Mujib and members of his family and toppled his government and thus paved the way for the military to emerge as the ruling elite in Bangladesh.³⁹

The bureaucratic elite of Bangladesh (both the top civil servants and the higher echelons of defense forces) played a dominant role in the war of Independence, were the lineal descendants of the colonial servicemen with their anti-political orientation and anti-political ethos. During the Pakistan era the bureaucratic elite became highly politicized because the senior bureaucrats of East Pakistan, both civil and military had mainly by default to take up the tasks of interest articulation and interest aggregation at the centre in

³⁹ Lawrence Lifschultz, *op. cit.*

the absence of political elite at that level, especially since 1958. The deep involvement of many of these bureaucratic elite in the Liberation War of 1971 made them not only conscious of political power but also generated in them keen desires of changing the power balance in their favour so that they could achieve their objectives with their primacy in the political system.⁴⁰

The 3rd November Coup was basically a pre-emptive coup in the sense that it was intended to prevent the radical forces from taking over control of the armed forces. In this move also the corporate interest of the military became the foremost consideration to the coup leaders. The coup-leaders, especially Khaled Mosharraf and Shafat Jamil, were dissatisfied with the prevailing conditions for two reasons. The “arrogant majors”, who staged the August Coup, broke the chain of command; there was an unmistakable infiltration of radical elements in the army and air force. The 3rd November coup was staged with a view to preventing the radical elements from infiltrating the exclusive preserve of the defense forces and also preventing from re-organizing the forces on the pattern of British Indian or Pakistan armed forces.⁴¹

General Zia undertook strong measures to handle the radical demands of the revolutionaries, who were calling for a classless army without officers in the cantonments and socialistic programmes for the society. It is the coalition among the mainstream, moderate Islamists, and the groups of traditional, modernist and fundamentalists Islamists that provided the bases of support for the regimes of Ziaur Rahman.

Zia's rule

When Zia stabilized his position both in the cantonments and society he took concrete steps not only for strengthening the position of the armed forces in the society but also for involving the military elite at the decision making process, both formal and informal. The

⁴⁰ Emajuddin Ahamed, *Military Rule and the Myth of Democracy*. The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1988

⁴¹ Ibid

decisions of raising five more divisions in five zones of Bangladesh, of increasing their professional expertise at the appropriate levels, of putting the military officers, whether in service or retired, in command positions in the corporations and secretariat, and of offering manifold benefits to the retired servicemen at different social sectors, are indicative of that.⁴² In short, it was the corporate interest of the military which became the crucial motivating factor for his policies and actions throughout the era. Some element of discipline in the army had been restored by Zia, but those were obviously not sufficient to save him from assassination by junior officers, who felt that they could thereby influence the political destiny of Bangladesh. So when a section of the armed forces felt that their interests were not safe at his hand, General Zia's actions began to be questioned and ultimately he had been killed.

The bureaucrats in general and military bureaucrats in particular, have wielded so much of power over the last 15 years that it has become impossible to make any political decisions sidetracking them.

Ershad's Islamisation

After collapsing Zia's regime, General Ershad in his military rule and despotic regime frequently and emphatically proclaimed a period of 'collaboration' between the military leaders and the Islamic fundamentalists following the Ziaul Huq model in Pakistan.

The Islamisation of the Military Force

To strengthen the "Bangladeshi Nationalism" the makers of it not only made the Bangladeshi Culture but also extensively Islamized the Military Force of the country. To educate the military force of an independent country towards the patriotism, the focus should be on culture, language and nationalism of them. The importance of the religion is secondary (unimportant) there. In the name of Islamisation, the Military force learned to be a Muslim first, and to protect Islam they have been created.

⁴² Emajuddin Ahamed. *op. cit.*

Over the subsequent fifteen years, military regimes faced a crisis of legitimacy in addition to a lack of moral leadership. The military regimes which, usurped power through coups in 1975 and 1982 and ruled the country until 1990, had pursued politics of Islamisation as a means to gain political legitimacy. This provided the previously banned religion-based parties with the opportunity to resurface in the political arena.

The history of Pakistan is the history of high ambition of the Generals, and in the history of Bangladesh we see the succession through the process of Islamisation of the Military Force. To protect Islam, and for its re-foundation Mushtaq, Taowab, General Ziaur Rahman and Ershad came to the political arena of Bangladesh.

Chapter Five

Regimes and Islamisation

Trends of Islam in Bangladesh

In the late 1970's, a resurgence of Islam enveloped many Muslim countries in South and South East Asia, including Bangladesh. Several factors contributed to this rising trend in Bangladesh mostly from the new spirit of Islam amongst an increasing number of Muslims in the country. Factors such as 'back to Quran' or the Purification of Islam movement, current in several Muslim countries, have also assisted the Islamisation process. In Bangladesh this resulted from the state of society; being dominated by corruption, evils and distorted social and ethical values. The secularization of Bangladesh in a contradictory and incomplete way was also a contributing factor responsible for the crystallization of Islamic orthodoxy among the various religious groups. After the fall of the Awami League Government, a process was started both by the government and by various groups which essentially helped towards this change of direction.

Construction of new mosques, extension, repair and beautification of old ones have become a unique feature of Islamic upsurge in Bangladesh and a considerable amount of money is spent for these-sometimes financed by foreign sources. As the place for daily and congregational prayer, the importance of mosques is great, but attempts are being made to make the mosques centers of social life (the organizations like Bangladesh Masjid Mission, Masjid Samaj, Baitul Sharaf and a number of others endeavor to provide opportunity to mould the lives of the public according to Islam by creating concrete example of Islamic society around the mosques) through programmes including propagation of Islam; education, training, social service and reform. According to an estimate of 1979 the number of mosques in Bangladesh was 119,180 (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics).

Thousands of migrant workers return to Bangladesh from the Gulf every year, imbued with conservative Islamist doctrines and flush with remittances that give them influence at home and have also become one of the contributing factors.¹

¹ Devin T.Hagerty. "Bangladesh in 2006: Living in 'Interesting Times.'" *Asian Survey*, Vol.47, No-1, Jan-Feb 2007

Long before the Muslim conquest of Bengal, Sufis and saints came to this region from Arab and other Central Asian countries and played an important part in the expansion of Islam in the area. In a society dominated by injustice, inequality and superstition the lives and activities of these Sufis along with the values of Islam attracted many people to this religion and the Khanqahs established by them became an ideal place for imparting religious instructions. In Bangladesh the saints and Sufis are held in high esteem and their Khanqahs and Dargahs besides being regular visiting places have become centres for annual assemblies of hundreds and thousands of God-fearing people.

Among the socio-religious and cultural organizations, the prominent ones are the Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh Masjid Mission, Islam Prachar Samity, the Quranic Society, Bangladesh Islamic Centre, Bangladesh Jamiatul Muddarresin, World Islam Mission Qurani Sunni, Ittehadul Ujmah and the council for Islamic Socio-Cultural Organization. All these organizations pursue similar works with varied emphasis including preaching of Islamic way of life, study of the Quran and Hadith, training, social and humanitarian service, research and publication of Islamic literature. Bangladesh Masjid Mission aims at making the mosque the centre of social life by providing opportunities through mosque-based programme. Islam Prachar Samity preaches Islam especially among non-Muslims.

Some of these organizations had existed before the formation of Bangladesh but only stepped up their activities when political parties were banned. Organizations like the Council for Islamic Socio-Cultural Organizations (CISCO) and Bangladesh Jamiatul Muddarresin (BJM) have taken very ambitious programmes and drawn up million dollar schemes-a device to attract financial assistance from oil-rich Muslim countries of Middle East like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The successive Governments of Bangladesh have shown increasing respect for Islam by taking a series of measures over the last years. At least two factors may be attributed to this growing concern towards Islam. First, the government is aware of the importance of

the rising tide of Islam and the popular sentiment. Secondly, the expectation of increasing financial assistance from Muslim countries to meet the cost of the development projects can not be overlooked.

The rise of Islamic, fundamentalist's political forces in Bangladesh signify the reassertion of the dominant Muslim identity of the Bangladesh population. Two other factors according to *Ali Riaz* have played key roles in the rise of Islamic political ideology and Islamists parties in Bangladesh. These are-the crises of hegemony of the ruling bloc and the politics of expediency by the "secularist" parties. These factors created an environment conducive to the rise of religious rhetoric in political discourse and subsequently allowed the Islamist parties to become a significant force in the Bangladesh polity.²

The causes and conditions for the rise of Islamists in Bangladesh are - the question of identity of the Bangladeshi population; incompatibility between the concept of secularism and the ethos of the newly formed nation; and certain internal variables, including failed secularist experimentation and certain external inputs such as remittance from West Asian Islamic countries. The following discussion will attempt to analyze the rise of fundamentalism in the political and social arena by focusing on the activities, initiatives by the political parties after independence.

In Mujib era (1971-1975)

The First Government of Bangladesh in-exile (11th December, 1971) at Mujibnagar in India banned the fundamentalist and communal political parties like Muslim League, Jamaat-E-Islami, Nejam -E-Islam and P.D.P. And in the constitution also the fundamentalist political parties were banned.

² Ali Riaz. *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh. op. cit.*

The government of independent Bangladesh announced its firm commitment to secularism as reflected in the constitution of 1972. It was felt that religion, separated from politics, had been freed from exploitation by the vested interests.

The Bangladesh Government banned the political parties which played anti-Bangladesh role during the war of liberation. In order to implement the principle of secularism, the first Bangladesh Constitution, passed on 4th November 1972, abolished a) all kinds of communalism b) political recognition of any religion by the state, c) exploitation of religion for political ends and d) discrimination of anybody on religious grounds.³ The government action affected the Muslim League and the Jamaat-E-Islami most. During the time the League leaders limited their activities to attending religious functions only, but the Jamaat continued its activities through various socio-cultural and socio-religious organizations like Bangladesh Masjid Mission, Masjid Samaj, and Bangladesh Islamic Centre and undertook publications of Islamic literature aimed at arousing Islamic consciousness of the people.

The Constitution of Bangladesh, adopted in 1972, incorporated four fundamental principles of state policy: nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism. Article 9 of the constitution stated:

“The unity and solidarity of the Bengali nation, which deriving its identity from its language and culture attained sovereign and independent Bangladesh through a united and determined struggle in the war of independence, shall be the basis of Bengali nationalism”⁴

The leadership remained mainly in the hands of liberal democrats organized under the banner of Awami League. This leadership lacked ideological clarity and could not inspire the people at large to get fully involved in the struggle of socio-economic emancipation, and to suffer deprivation for the sake of objectives of the national liberation movement. These weaknesses in the motive forces of the national liberation movement in

³ The Constitution of Bangladesh, 1972. p.13

⁴ Government of Bangladesh, 1972. The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Dhaka. p 5. Article 9 was later substituted by Proclamation Order 1, 1977.

Bangladesh created conditions for the internal reaction to strike back and for the imperialists to intervene to achieve their own objectives and this was followed with the coup of 15th August, 1975 and the aftermath consequences.⁵

Anti-India feelings and anti-Hindu feelings became synonymous; the Awami league government had not given any suitable answers to any kind of mis-propaganda, fundamentalist communal proclamation and encouragement.⁶ Within a short period after liberation/independence of Bangladesh from Pakistan the whole scenario had been changed, the consciousness, perception of a liberated society from oppression, exploitation and the secular conscience had been lost.

The newly constructed ideology was fraught with contradictions, including its position with respect to religion. On the one hand, the new ideology propagated secularism while on the other hand; the Prime Minister joined the Islamic conference and pacified the Islamist forces with patronage. It should be noted that the Awami League Government could not altogether ignore the religious sentiments of the people of the second largest Muslim country of the world and retained the study of Islamiath and Arabic in the school syllabus introduced during Pakistani period. It also supported the activities of the Islamic Academy which subsequently became the Islamic Foundation. The eagerness of the government of independent Bangladesh through changing the state policy made the Muslim world to show their interest to help Bangladesh through donation, funds, aids to tide over from loss, destruction in the liberation war and natural calamities.

By mid-1970s, the impact of the resurgence of Islam in West-Asia was felt in Bangladesh and some West Asian and North African diplomats attached themselves to various functions of certain religio-political groups.⁷

⁵ S.R. Chakravarty, "The National Liberation Movement: Problems and Prospects." In S.R Chakravarty. Virendra Narain, *Bangladesh*, Vol.2, Domestic Politics, South Asia Studies Series 13 (Ed.). South Asian Publishers PVT LTD, New Delhi, India, 1986.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ M.Anisuzzaman. *op. cit*

1974 famine

The economic loss in the liberation period of 1971, the natural calamity like flood, typhoon every year, the unlimited corruption by one fraction of Awami League government, the failure of taking timely steps by the leadership, the presence of conspirators in the governmental administration and above all the destructive flood of 1974 caused the famine in 1974. The government failed to control the situation.

Thus Sheikh Mujibur Rahman called for a second revolution, for a national unity.

General forgiveness

In 1973 on the anniversary of the victory day Bongobondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman freed the war criminals of 1971 from the punishment for their despicable involvement and collaboration with Pakistani army to kill more than 30 lakhs people of East Pakistan, rape, destruction, and genocide. Their freedom resulted in the establishment and rehabilitation of the anti- liberation, fundamentalist power in the political and societal arena within two years of independence.

Second Islamic summit in 1974

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was invited to attend a conference of the heads of Muslim states held in Lahore in 1974. In 1974, on 22nd February in Lahore, Pakistan the Second Islamic summit took place, where Sheikh Mujibur Rahman attended. After an extraordinary endeavor and mediation of some Islamic country, Pakistan acknowledged Bangladesh as an independent country. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said in his speech that, not destruction but for creation, not war but for peace, not suffering but for welfare of human beings we have to work. If we can accumulate, infuse the love for human and the eternal values, principles of dignity that had been preached by “Mahanabi”, then the Muslim people would be able to contribute categorically to solve the modern day’s problem. Being

infused with these values and principles for a new life, on the basis of peace and equity/justice we can build an international tradition.⁸

It is noticeable that, Sheikh Mujib did not raise and sideline the necessary issues of a newly independent country like Bangladesh in the conference, which would have upset the leaders of the Muslim countries.

In the whole context we can see how Pakistan lead by Mr. Julfiqqar Ali Bhutto during that period became successful in their diplomacy, on the basis of issues like, Bangladesh forgiving the war criminals and prisoners, making Bangladesh attend the Islamic Summit and also the release of war-prisoners and getting them back home. In 1977, on 5th July Bhutto had been thrown out of power and at last hanged on 4th April, 1979 by General Zia-ul Haque (who had been given promotion by Bhutto himself). In the book written by Bhutto called "If I am assassinated" (based on his 300 pages statement when under trial), he mentioned the barbarism of Pakistani army in the report of Hamidur Rahman Commission (a Supreme Court lawyer) and said that, 'he did not publish the report in spite of the pressurization by the people and opposition parties for the reason of the wish by the officers, and being respectful towards army force. The recent military leaders also have not published it, because it is a very serious written accusation against the army and the military leaders. The report is important. It is a history of rape and plunder. If in this era, the punishment is to whip for raping, and cutting hands for theft, plundering then I shudder to think about the amount of people without hands.'⁹

It is necessary to note that, still in Bangladesh the justice or punishment has not been taken place for the war criminals, collaborators of Pakistani army.

Second revolution and 'BAKSAL'

The war criminals were released and also forgiven. There were destructing, devastating flood, epidemic and famine in the country. The law and governance condition were

⁸ *Daily Ittefaq*, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February, 28, 1974

⁹ Julfiqqar Ali Bhutto, *If I Am Assassinated*, p-139. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

deteriorating day by day, ultimate internal clash and conflict arose in the Awami League government. The administration system started showing to be at the edge of breaking up. In the end of 1974 the finance minister Tajuddin Ahmad (who formed the first independent government in Mujibnagar, India, and led the liberation movement in the absence of Sheikh Mujib) resigned from the ministry/cabinet for the reason of the internal clash, and mis-propaganda, rumour, accusation against him.

In this cloudy scenario of political arena, Sheikh Mujib called for the “Second Revolution” and also amended the constitution in 1975, 25th January by changing the prime ministerial government to presidential government, and one party governmental system.

Sheikh Mujib wanted to establish socialism in the society of Bangladesh under the leadership of Awami league. He wanted to break the bureaucracy and also took the initiative to do that. In his speech in the Central Committee of “BAKSAL” he said that, ‘this administration, secretariat, have to be reformulated. It can not go on like this. I am going for that.’¹⁰ But he could not reformulate it.

In his party there were different categories of people like feudal, reactionary, and sectarian/fundamentalist and also on the other hand nationalist secular progressive minded people. With all of them he established “BAKSAL”, where he included some socialist leaders and like-minded people. But most of its members were unfaithful towards the objective of “BAKSAL”. To make this kind of party agenda successful, a politically conscious, dedicated, firm minded member force would have been needed, but the “BAKSAL” did not have that kind of member force. Sometimes the activities of the members not only mortified the impression of the party but also Sheikh Mujib’s.

Sheikh Mujib also wanted to make the Army a people’s force and he even positioned Army in his central Committee of “BAKSAL”. He also gave the right to the army to take the membership of “BAKSAL”. He said, “I want my Army to be a people’s Army. i do

¹⁰ Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.* p.175

not want my Army to fight against anybody. But I want my Army to defend myself and at the same time to work” (aforesaid). But the Army was not happy with his speech and belief. Without giving the Army force a necessary political education, positioning Army force in the political arena was not a timely decision we must say. The other socialist countries built the Army force on the basis of the principles of socialism. However a country like Bangladesh did not have an atmosphere of that sort. The ideology and the principles of “BAKSAL” were conflicting with the interest of the Army of the country. And at last Sheikh Mujib was brutally assassinated by one fraction of the Army.

The coup/insurgence of 15th August: Khondokar Mushtaq became President

Within 12 hours after the assassination of the whole family of Mujib, the peoples Republic of Bangladesh’s new government started their governmental work. The Martial Law had been imposed until sunset, but in order for the “Jumma Namaaz” it had been relaxed for one and half an hour. The next day the newspapers came out with the news that, “yesterday what was Friday, after the Jumma Prayers (Namaaz), the special prayers for the new government under the leadership of Khondokar Mushtaq took place in the overall country. The Mosques of Dhaka were having unprecedented public gathering for the “Jumma Prayers (Namaaz)”.¹¹

From the early morning of 15th August, the Dhaka centre of the Radio Bangladesh was declared again and again that Sheikh Mujib had been killed and the power had been taken by the military force under the leadership of Khondokar Mushtaq.

Khondokar Mushtaq was involved in the insurgence and it was also led by him. The whole thing was a profound conspiracy. After taking power Mushtaq banned the “BAKSAL” but it is interesting to note that, he was actively involved in the one party system and establishment of “BAKSAL”. he was in the fourth rank of the 15th members constituting executive committee. And he never criticized “BAKSAL” before coming to power.

¹¹ *Daily Bangla*, Dhaka. Bangladesh. August 16th. 1975

against him. In October the progressive student leaders of Dhaka University united and openly mourned for killing Sheikh Mujib. They also started building the struggle against Mushtaq which was supported by a fraction of Awami League. Mushtaq called for parliamentary session of Awami League in October only, where slogans were raised openly against him. Many people in this session challenged the legal factor of Mushtaq's being president. Within a short while the political condition of Bangladesh went against Mushtaq.

3rd November, 1975 insurgency

On 3rd November, 1975 a sector of the Army, under the leadership of the freedom fighter Brigadier Khaled Musarraff brought about another insurgency/coup, and threw Mushtaq from power (this had not been supported by the Awami League). The Chief of the Military force, Major General Ziaur Rahman resigned and was put under house arrest by the insurgents. And in the meantime, the four architects of independent Bangladesh (Syad Najrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, Mansur Ali and Kamruzzaman) were killed brutally in the Dhaka Central Jail to thoroughly flout any prospect of immediate restoration of progressive Government making by this leadership with the help of the insurgents. The killers of the four leaders of the Awami League left the country with the help of Mushtaq and through the whole incident; the unfinished conspiracy of killing Mujib became fulfilled, preventing the prospects of a civilian revival and thereby left the field clear for the ascendancy to state power of the armed forces.

The killer, apparently with the good offices of the US ambassador to Bangladesh, David T. Boster, negotiated the safe exit of the 17 army officers directly involved in the killings of Sheikh Mujib and his family. They fled to Bangkok and from there after a long search for asylum, initially denied by both the US and Pakistan, ended up through the good offices of President Bhutto, in Libya.¹⁴

¹⁴ Rehman Sobhan. *op. cit.*

On 5th November, 1975 Mushtaq abandoned his power, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court A.M Sayem became the President (6th President of Bangladesh).

7th November: soldier's mutiny

On 7th November the soldiers rebelled against the Generals and it spread in the whole country. With the soldiers of the Army force, the reactionary political parties, anti-liberation fundamentalist group, anti-India radical left power and Rajakar's (Pakistani Collaborators) joined hands. The day has been called "Soldier People Mutiny" day now, and has also been rearing with the national respect and pride. In this revolution Khaled Musarraff got killed, and Zia came to power again with the help of Nationalist Socialist Party (Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-JSD) lead by freedom fighter Cornel Abu Taher. But it is again interesting to note that, the JSD did not get a share of the power.

President Sayem: Ziaur Rahman behind the power

The 7th November revolution by the soldiers brought the Army force in open political platform. By the name of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court one by one military law had been introduced. The main figure of the political scenery was the Chief of the Military force Major General Zia-ur Rahman. The Chief of the Air-Force was Air Vice marshal M.G.Tawab, who was leading the radical rightist anti-liberation fundamentalist, sectarian groups. On 7th march, 1976 in the Sohrawardy Garden the public gathering took place for an Islamic soiree/religious preaching (waz mahfil) where Tawab gave his speech and demanded for declaring Bangladesh as an Islamic People's Republic.¹⁵ The meeting concluded with the unanimously passed 6th clause constituted charter of demand, the clauses were-changing the national flag, changing national anthem, declaring the country an Islamic Peoples Republic, destroying the monument (Shaheed Minar) that had been built to pay homage to the martyr of the language struggle for the mother tongue as Bengali in 1952 and to build a monument to pay homage to the dead Rajakar's (Pakistani Collaborators) in the 1971 liberation war. The whole incident and scenario of the political

¹⁵ Ali Riaz, *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh*, op. cit

arena of that time gives us a picture of how the anti-liberation, fundamentalist power got united and emerged with firm power within such a short period due to the support and encouragement from the government.

Annulations of clause no.38 of the constitution

The military regime annulled the no.38 section/clause of the constitution where the clause was enacted to ban the fundamentalist, sectarian political parties and activities. In the month of July, 1976, the Sayem government declared the enforcement of the ordinance for political party regulations, where the political parties got allowance to appear. And in this process (the annulling of no. 38 clause of the constitution and the new ordinance) the banned fundamentalist, sectarian groups and parties by the first government of Bangladesh again could appear themselves as permitted political parties.¹⁶

When the government relaxed control over the political parties as many as seventy two parties applied for registration. Among them twenty one had Islamic titles or stood for Islamic principles. At the beginning only three such political parties were recognized, they are the Muslim League, Council Muslim League and Jamaat sponsored Islamic Democratic League. The number of Islamic parties has since increased, though their exact number is difficult to ascertain. The prominent ones are the Muslim League, Islamic Democratic league, Jamaat-E-Islami, Nijam-E-Islam, Democratic League, Islamic Party, Jamaat-E-Ulama-E-Islam and Bangladesh Khilafat Andolon (formed by Hafiz-ji-Huzur).

On 30th November, 1976, the president Sayem handed over the power of Chief Martial Law Administrator to General Zia-ur Rahman. And Sayem became the figurative Chief of the State.

¹⁶ M.Anisuzzaman. *op. cit.*

On 21st April of 1977, due to the reason of ill-health President Sayem handed over the President-ship to the Chief of the Military Force (and also Chief Martial Law Administrator), Major General Zia-ur Rahman. Major Zia took the oath as the 7th president of the country.

President Zia's regime (1975-1981)

Amendment of the constitution: changing the primary principles of the nation

On 22nd April, 1977 the enforcement of the amendment of the constitution took place. The primary national principles of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh had been declared a fresh. In his speech on Television and radio he said that, 'because of discontent of the common people about the fundamental values, principles, clauses, the necessary enactment of the amendment of the constitution is taking place where the amendment will portrait the real fulfillment of the common country men's mentality, hopes and desires. It is our firm belief that this system will be able to create the firm national unity and integration and also reunite everyone to work for nation building. So there will be the insertion of "Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim" (In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful) in the beginning of the constitution, and the primary principles of the state/nation will be, the "Absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah shall be the basis of all actions" in place of Secularism [article 8(1 a)], Nationalism, Democracy and socialism in the meaning of economic and social justice/equity. The secularism has been exempted/deducted from the primary principles of the nation. And also in the proposal, instead of "the historical struggle for the freedom of the nation", "the historical war for the freedom of the nation" will be applicable.'¹⁷

Article 12 was omitted too [The Proclamation (Amendment) Order No. I, 1977].

¹⁷ *Daily Bangla*, Dhaka, Bangladesh, April 23rd, 1977 And also see M.Anisuzzaman, *op. cit.*

The exemption of secularism paves the way for the international and national ruling classes to use the religion and the natural religious feelings of the people as the weapon to rule over.

The opening of the Department of Religious Affairs under a full-fledged Minister was a significant step. The following official measures were also taken for the projection of Islam: hanging of posters in government offices with quotations from the Quran, calling for dispensation of impartial justice, display of Quranic verses and of the Prophetic traditions in public places, flying of Eid Mubarak with the National flags on two Eid festival days, publications of official messages on other Muslim occasions like I'd-i-Miladun Nabi, Sab-e-Barat and Muharram, offering of Munajat on important occasions and the projection of Islam on Radio and Television through holding of Milad, teaching of the Quran and the introduction of the call to prayer.

Major General Zia always preferred to preface his official speeches with "Bismillah-er-Rahman-er-Rahim".

The Bangladeshi Nationalism instead of Bengali Nationalism

Major General Zia also changed the definition of the nationalism of the Bangladeshi people. The Bengali nationalism became Bangladeshi Nationalism. The whole initiative gives us the message that he wanted to separate the Bengalis of this soil from the thousand years old great inheritance of the Bengali's. He also had given explanation that, 'the Bengalis of this area are totally different than the West Bengal Bengalis in thought-consciousness, conception, geography-politics, religion-nature/atmosphere, happiness-festivals, and tradition-history. So that's why our clan is Bengali but our nationalism is Bangladeshi. The West Bengal Bengali's nationalism is Indian, not Bengali.'

He believed that the culture is the primary tool to build nationalism so that's why he called the intellectuals of Bangladesh and asked to create a new culture and to build a new nationalism for Bangladesh; which is "Bangladeshi".

Seeking for confidence vote

Zia called for the confidence presage/index voting towards the nation on his pursued principles and his governing model. On 30th may, 1977 the plebiscite took place, where Zia got 3, 32, 34, 752 out of the 3, 83, 63, 856 population of the country, which shows that he got 98.8 percent votes. The 98 percent vote in favour of him, had been described the biggest example of polling fraud/trickery by the scholars of Political Science.¹⁸

Advisory Committee and its members

After the confidence vote Major Zia extended his Advisory Committee (the same position as ministers), he included politicians, technologist, expert/shrewd bureaucrats in his Advisory Committee who were reactionary, fundamentalist, sectarian and anti-liberation minded figures.

The Presidential election and the election campaign propaganda

Within a year of confidence voting Zia started preparing for the presidential election. Already the pro-imperialist, fundamentalist, anti-freedom struggle minded, rightist, reactionary, pro-Pakistani political parties and groups assembled surrounding him and made/built a political platform for him. In his public meetings before election he started propagating anti-BAKSAL proclamation where he basically ended up with anti-India propaganda.

Zia had won by getting a huge number of votes which was inevitable. He formed his first ministry/cabinet on 29th January, 1978. He centralized the party and administrative power in his own hand, and to do that he used the weapon/tool of religion 'Islam' like Pakistan.

¹⁸ Ali Riaz, *God willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh. op. cit.*

Forming own party: Bangladesh Nationalist party (BNP)

By the late 1970's there was a quite powerful constituency to stand behind Zia and persuade him to use the resources of the state and cantonment to build a political party which could challenge the dominance of the Awami League in Bangladesh.

After winning the election Major Zia formed his own political party which was christened "Bangladesh Nationalist Party" in short BNP. He also became the chairman of the party. The integral part of Muslim League did not bow to his leadership, but a fraction of Awami League joined him. The election provided constitutional legitimacy to the military regime.

His created political Party's values and principles had been alluded to by saying that, 'for the reason of foreign perspective, thought and infiltration in the culture, an indigenous cultural development what is indispensable for national integration and the Bangladesh's nationalism has not taken place. A section of people have been in-fluxed by the foreign support and money are still preventing the development of a healthy, natural culture, where the hopes and desires of the common people of Bangladesh can be reflected. The evil/inauspicious infiltration of foreign perspective/thought stream in our national culture should be prevented.'

After declaring the parliamentary election date, he started saying that, the freedom struggle of 1971 was basically a civil-war between own parts, which took place because of India's intervention. One group of intellectuals, literary figures, and journalists started establishing the view that emergence of Bangladesh is the result of the replete implementation of the Lahore proposal in 1940; Bangladesh is the mature/ripe figure of the "Two Nations Theory", through which Pakistan came to reality.

The second parliamentary election and its result

On 20th February, 1979, the second parliamentary election took place. In this election the opposition party Awami League got 40 seats. And Jamaat –E-Islami, Muslim League got 20 seats.

Jamaat-E-Islami already openly in public declared that, their role in 1971 was correct. Jamaat also demanded to change the national flag and national anthem. On the national anthem their view had been openly stated that the Bangladesh national anthem does not have any independent character in it because it has been written by a foreigner, different nationality born poet who wrote it from a special perspective. So the national anthem should be written afresh and should be based on Bangladesh's majority people's nationalist values and principles that are Islamic values and principles. Jamaat does not acknowledge Rabindranath as Bangladesh's national poet, but Kazi Najrul Islam.¹⁹

In Zia's cabinet Shah Azizur Rahman was nominated as the Prime Minister, a former Muslim Leaguer, who had represented the Yahya regime as a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly in the liberation war period of 1971.

In spite of the corruption, relative-favourism, and smuggling being the main reasons for the country men's misery, "India" had been made the main cause/root of it by the Zia government for its own political benefits.

Already in Zia's regime there were overall seventeen unsuccessful military insurgences which made Zia very harsh and strict towards the military force. But he could not flow his strictness in the vein of country politics, administration in spite of centralizing the power in his hand.

On 30th May, 1981, the last attempted insurgence killed him in Chittagong.

¹⁹ *Weekly Sunday* (Rabibar). Dhaka. Bangladesh, 25th March, 1979

New Army rule: President Sattwar as a temporary President

The Deputy-President, Justice Abdus Sattwar took oath as the temporary President in accordance with the constitution clauses. The military force exposed their allegiance towards the constitutional government. President Sattwar declared the new presidential election date. The cabinet was not changed. President Sattwar got the nomination from BNP, in spite of an internal clash and also after an emerging debate and issues towards his nomination as a Presidential candidate.

On 15th November, 1981 election took place and Justice Abdus Sattwar was nominated as the eighth president of the country. He formed his cabinet ministry; the 42 members contained ministry took oath on 27th November, 1981.

During that time the Chief Martial Law Administrator General Ershad gave a speech addressing the nation, where he said that, since the 30th of May, the people had been requesting him to take power; however he firmly rejected it because of his belief that he could better serve the country in his position. He hoped because of his profound respect towards the democracy that, politicians who are in the power would take necessary methods for governing the country in this crisis period and will take along the country towards the development and prosperity. But it is a matter of regret that, the recent events reduced our hopes and desires to dust.²⁰

In the tenure of President Sattwar, the military force asked firmly for the constitutional acknowledgement in the state management. They wished not only to be involved in protecting the country but also to take part in building, forming the country by joining hands with the common people. And not only that, they started giving the example of democratic military model based countries like Indonesia and Turkey.

But President Sattwar did not bow down towards the demand made by the military force. During his tenure the top rank leaders kept themselves busy in their internal party clashes and the country was fully waved by the corruption; the economy got upset. President

²⁰ *Daily Sangbad*. Dhaka, Bangladesh. March 25th, 1981

Sattwar rejected his ministry cabinet because of the accusation against them involving in profound corruption. And the next day, 12th February, he had chosen 18 members including 10 ministers and 8 deputy ministers out of the rejected cabinet ministry. But still he could not surmount the overall condition of the country. He had been thrown out from the power; and aiming to save the country and nation from social, administrative and economic misery General Hussain Muhammad Ershad took the power of the country being the Chief Martial Law Administrator.

The Ershad regime (1982-1991)

The past

General Hussain Muhammad Ershad was in West-Pakistan, when the liberation movement was going on in 1971. There is no contribution from his side in the freedom struggle. He left Pakistan because East Pakistan was liberated. He did not take part in the freedom struggle but left East Pakistan for West Pakistan, and had shown his role of being obedient as an integral countries soldier. In 1972, when the Bengali Officers and soldiers were indicted for trial/deliberation under the accusation of being traitors, Lf. Cornell Ershad became the Chairman of the Tribunal.²¹

Prioritizing Islam

General Ershad took over the power of Bangladesh on 24th march, 1982. After taking power addressing the common country people he says that, 'one of the aims of freedom struggle was to ensure the reflection of the religion in our personal and aggregated life.'²² Again he says that, 'the foundation of the new system of the society will be Islam, Islam will get its proper position in the constitution, will move ahead with the Islamic banner/standard, will build the country and Islam will be alive again in Bangladesh.

²¹ Kankar Sinha. *op cit*.

²² *Daily Bichitra*. Dhaka, March 26th. 1982

Ten years had been lost from our life and are not going to come back. Feel that, we have learned about other religions more than Islam.'²³

In the Islamic Conference organized by "Bangladesh Jamiatun Modarresin" he says that, 'as the religion, Islam will be above all, on top. Bangladesh is the country of Muslims. The struggle of this time is the struggle to create the country as an Islamic country.'²⁴

In favour of his perspective, 53 lawyers of the Supreme Court give a statement by saying that, starting from Hazarat Adam to every Muslim of this time regardless of place-time are fundamentalist. The fundamentalism is the part of conscience of Islam. If it is imagined that the other community is greatest, then the conscience of a Muslim gets destroyed.²⁵

The institution of Zakat Fund headed by the President of Bangladesh is one of the actions of the administration thereby taking the country along Islamic principles. General Ershad had also declared that the principles of Islam would be duly ensured in the future constitution of Bangladesh. The announcement for introduction of Arabic from class I in the school which aroused some controversy is also an indication of the government's determination for extension of Islamic learning. Islamic University and an Islamic Research Centre merged with this University have set up.

Since 1974 Bangladesh has become gradually an important and influential member of the Organization of Islamic Conference.

Eighteen Clause establishments: Forming own political party

Within two days of his military regime, at the conference hall of the main office of the Military Force, he gives his speech addressing the officers by saying,

²³ *Daily Sunday (Rabibar)*. Dhaka. January 2nd, 1983; Seerat Conference, the Speech of Chief Martial Law Administrator, 27th December. 1982

²⁴ *Daily Ittefaq*. Dhaka. 15th January. 1983

²⁵ *Weekly Ekata*. Dhaka: 4th February. 1983

“We will stay in power for about two years and then hand over power to a political party but obviously not to Awami League as Awami League will destroy the Armed Forces”²⁶
But within a short while he emerged in the political platform of the country by creating his Establishment Council of Eighteen Clauses. To give the explanation of his Eighteen Clauses, he declared that, this was not a doctrine of actions, but the foundation of living. The first philosophy of this is protecting freedom and autonomy, the second one is Islam.²⁷

His “Establishment Council of the Eighteen Clauses”, emerged as a political party within a short period, which was first named as “Jana Dal”.

General Ershad became President by taking the overall power in his hand on 11th December, 1983. His “Jana Dal” became “National Front” and lastly appeared as “National party”. He became famous in history for corruption and women oriented scandals. General Ershad frequently and emphatically proclaimed a period of ‘collaboration’ between the military leaders and the Islamic fundamentalists following the Ziaul Huq model in Pakistan.

Islam as the national religion and Bangladesh is the Islamic peoples Republic

General Ershad declared Friday as the weekend and declared Jihad to establish Islam in the every aspect of the society. He reformed (8th reformation of the constitution) the constitution and declared Islam as the national religion on 7th June, 1988. The Eighth reformation of the constitution clearly says that,

*“The national religion of this People’s Republic is Islam; thereafter the other religions can be practiced with peace and amity in the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.”*²⁸

²⁶ Rafiqul Islam(Retired Major, PSC). Swairashasaner Nay Bachar: 1982-90(Nine Years of Despotism Tyranny: 1982-90).University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, August, 1991.

²⁷ *Daily Sangbad*, Dhaka; 28th August, 1983

²⁸ M.Anisuzzaman. *op. cit.*

We can easily say that, this step, means declaring Islam as the national religion reduced the other community members to the second category/inferior citizens of the country and reducing their equal state of rights from the Muslim community members or citizens of the country.

The opposition parties like BNP and Awami League reacted and criticized intensely the reformation by the Ershad Government, but it is interesting to note that, both of the political parties went to power after this, but they did not change the Eighth Reformation and kept it effective.

The Prime-Minister of the Ershad regime, Ataur Rahman in public brought very serious accusation against the poet-literary/writers for their using the West-Bengal language.²⁹ The deliberation of the caste of the words basically resulted into instigating fundamentalism.

Communal Riot of 1990's

The biggest wicked act of this regime is 1990's October-November's communal riot. On the occasion of 'Babri Mosque' demolition in India, a planned, instigated communal riot took place in Bangladesh, where the Hindu community was targeted.

The downfall of Ershad regime

The despotic Ershad had been thrown from power through a historical struggle by the common people of the country. General Ershad resigned and handed over the power to an Interim Government. A neutral election had been conducted by the Interim Government on 27th February, 1991. But still some political parties used fundamentalist methods for benefiting them politically in the election.

²⁹ *Daily Sangbad*, Sub-Editorial Section. "An Identifying Token of the Bad Luck of the Past". Dhaka; 6th August. 1984.

A new democratic government of Bangladesh started its journey on 20th March, 1991. BNP Government took power under the leadership of Prime-Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

In the new democratic era of Bangladesh history (since 1991), the two main political parties have sought the support of Islamists, fundamentalists groups particularly the Jamaat-e-Islami, either to achieve power or to topple a democratically elected regime.

Chapter Six

Political Parties, Political Process and Islam

Begum Khaleda Zia era (1991-1995 & 2001-2006)

After the downfall of the Ershad regime and the general election of 1991, the BNP sought the support of the Jamaat-e-Islami to form the government. The BNP, with 140 seats in parliament, was eleven seats short of claiming a stake in power. It relied on the Jamaat for backing. This ‘marriage of convenience’¹ was over within two and half years, after which the Awami League succeeded in wooing the Jamaat into the fold to unseat the BNP regime through popular agitation. The Jamaat went back to the BNP camp again in 1998 and became a partner of a coalition that came to power in 2001.

The rise of the fundamentalists is not limited to the political arena; its reach is extended to the rural power structure as well. Islamists have made use of an extrajudicial system called *salish* (village arbitration) and unleashed a terror of *fatwa* (religious edict) in rural Bangladesh. Instituted by the Muslim clerics and Islamist groups since 1991, *salish* and *fatwa* have become common features of Bangladesh society.

On April 4, 2000, Khaleda Zia declared at a rally, “We have united to protect the nation, our hard-earned independence, and Islam.” Present on the dais were Golam Azam, the Ameer (chief) of the largest Islamist, fundamentalist party Jamaat-e-Islami; Azizul Haq, who claims to be a shaikhul hadith (an interpreter of Prophet Muhammad’s words) and is a leader of a militant Islamist organization called Islamic Oikya Jote (IOJ, Islamic United Front); and former military dictator General H.M.Ershad, who was previously convicted on graft charges and indicted on a number of other corruption-related matters.² During the general elections in 1996, for example Khaleda Zia repeatedly told public meetings that blowing conch shells (used for Hindu celebrations) would replace the Azzan (call for Muslim prayers from the mosque) if the Awami League was voted to power.³

¹ Ali Riaz, *God willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh*, op. cit.

² Ibid

³ Ali Riaz, “Minorities in Bangladesh: The Enemy Within? An Enquiry Into the Causes of Violence Against Religious Minorities in 2001.” *Asian Profile*, Vol.33, No.3, June, 2005

Before the 2001 election BNP made its alliance with the above informed parties. The centre-right alliance bagged more than two-thirds of seats and formed the cabinet in October 2001 with two members from the Jamaat-e-Islami.

The BNP backed the IOJ fully. For more than a month, street agitation gripped the country and scores of people died in the confrontations. The tension gradually died down when the Supreme Court stayed the verdict (issuing fatwa is illegal and unconstitutional and that anyone engaged in such act should be tried in the court of law) for an indefinite period. But it was clear to the public at large that the IOJ had the means to create havoc, if it wanted to.

During the general election of 2001, more than fifteen Islamist parties filed candidates for parliamentary seats. Some of them have gained significant power and influence, mobilizational capacity. The BNP-led coalition's electoral victory in October 2001 was immediately followed by violent attacks-killing, raping, looting and destruction of property against Hindus and many Muslim Awami Leaguers, by BNP supporters.⁴

The election was followed by unabated violence against members of the minority Hindu community, allegedly with the complicity of the ruling party and the state. Hindus were faced with death, destruction of property and general intimidation. Women had been raped and abused. A large number of refugees crossed the border into neighboring West Bengal. The newly elected government, however, refused to acknowledge any such incidents and insisted that the opponents of the regime were conducting a smear campaign. The wanton violence against the Hindu community in 2001 and the horrific tales of atrocities perpetrated against them are not only tragic but should be seen as an indication of the path along which Bangladesh politics is heading. The attacks on Hindus were well planned, and carried out by identifiable groups the BNP and Jamaat, and encouraged by the state machinery controlled by the BNP made the whole instance state-sponsored violence.⁵

⁴ Rounaq Jahari. "Bangladesh in 2002: Imperiled Democracy" .. *Asian Survey*. Vol43. No.1. January-February. 2003

⁵ Ali Riaz. *Asian Profile*. *op. cit.*

The government also took the help of army to restore law and order in the country. In a country where citizens have witnessed the disastrous consequences of military regimes at different times and have waged long struggles to overthrow military rule, a call to the army by a civilian government to perform police functions is demoralizing. It is an open admission that the civilian administration is unable to cope with the first business of governance: establishing law and order. It is also an ominous sign for the future of democracy in Bangladesh.⁶ At least 111 custodial deaths have been reported, including 30 in police custody in suspicious circumstances. The government commissioned an elite security force in April, 2004 called the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) to combat criminal activities. By late November, it had been responsible for the deaths of 61 people.⁷

Attacks on the press continued throughout 2004; by December, at least five journalists had been killed and 11 injured. Separately, the total number of deaths at the hands of law enforcement was widely estimated at 238.⁸

In January, ceding to the demands of another Islamist, fundamentalist partner of the coalition, the Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ, Islamic United Front), the government banned the publications of the Ahmadiyyas, a Muslim sect. The IOJ, in collusion with other small Islamist groups, desecrated and demolished Ahmadiyya mosques in various parts of the country.⁹

By 2001, there were 31, 406 *madrassas* imparting teaching to 4,718,549 students by 315,732 teachers throughout Bangladesh.¹⁰

From 2001 to October 2006, corruption seemed to become institutionalized at all levels down to the rural level, including the politicizing of civil servants.¹¹ Meanwhile,

⁶ Ibid

⁷ "2 More Killed in RAB Crossfire". *New Age*; Dhaka, December 1, 2004

⁸ Ali Riaz, "Bangladesh in 2004: The Politics of Vengeance and the Erosion of Democracy. *Asian Survey*, Vol.45, No.1, Jan-Feb. 2005

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Prasanta Sahoo. "Bangladesh in the Fry Pot". *World Focus*, 328, April 2007

parliament had passed the 14th amendment to the constitution in May, 2004 which increased the number of seats reserved for women from 30 to 45, made provisions for allocating these seats proportionally to parties, and extended the retirement age for Supreme Court justices from 65 to 67 years. The timing of the change in retirement age for judges also raised a serious question, whether “it has been done with an eye to the make up of the caretaker government that will hold the next elections.”¹²

Sheikh Hasina era (1996-2001)

The Awami League, which once took pride in its secular identity, made a remarkable change in its approach toward religion and religion-based political parties. By the early 1990's, it preferred to be portrayed as a party that valued Islam as an integral part of the culture of Bangladesh. Beginning in 1991, the statements of party leaders and party publicity materials showed that the Awami League was eager to present itself as a suitable custodian of Islam in Bangladesh.

The Awami League, co-opted the Jatiya Party (JP) and the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), began to agitate for the appointment of a neutral caretaker government (NCG) to supervise new elections, on the consequences of the charge against BNP with vote rigging in the Magura parliamentary by-election considerably enhanced the political acceptability of the Jamaat.¹³

The national elections were held on February 15th, 1996. The opposition boycott of the elections resulted in a sweeping victory for the BNP, which won 289 of the 300 seats in near voteless elections that were reminiscent of the 1988 polls held by General H.M. Ershad. Voter turnout was less than 10% of the eligible electorate, the BNP engaged in massive vote rigging, and independent monitors denounced the process as flawed. The elections therefore not only failed to end the political impasse but called into question the

¹¹ Kirsty Hughes. “Bangladesh: Moving Towards or Away From Democracy?” *EPW*. Vol. 42. No-15. 14-20 April, 2007

¹² “14th Amendment: Does it Add Value to the Constitution?” *Daily Star*, Editorial. Dhaka. May 18, 2004

¹³ Stanley A.Kochanek. “Bangladesh in 1996: The 25th Year of Independence”, *Asian Survey*. Vol.37. No.2. February, 1997

legitimacy of the BNP government, adding fuel to the opposition movement for the creation of an NCG (Neutral Caretaker Government) to conduct elections.¹⁴

Symbolic expressions of this change have been the carrying of prayer beads and wearing of scarves by AL Chief Sheikh Hasina. In addition to making pilgrimages to Mecca, Hasina began using Islamic phrase such as *Bismillah-ar-Rahman-ar-Rahim*, *khoda hafez* and *Insallah* in her public speeches. Party political posters also carried these phrases to assuage the devout among the electorate.

In December 2006, as the January drew near Sheikh Hasina announced a partnership with a hard line Islamic, fundamentalist party Bangladesh Khilafat-e-Majlish (BKM) signing MoUs (memorandum of understandings) to win a few more votes, what has been renounced afterwards (in mid February) when there were lot of criticism took place against the decision.¹⁵

Beyond tokenism such as offering a few high level government positions to the Hindus, the Awami League did little for the minorities. Sheikh Hasina made a comment when a delegation of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council met her in New York on September 17, 1999 while she was visiting the United States as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh what basically is indicative of her and her party's views. The delegation asked the Prime Minister to look into the alleged persecution of the minorities of Bangladesh. And she responded saying, "Why do you keep one foot in Bangladesh and another in India? Try to be loyal citizens of Bangladesh".¹⁶

The Awami League's half-hearted effort to annul the discriminatory "Vested Property Act" law in 2001 prior to the general elections shows that they were more interested in securing Hindu votes than making a subsequent change.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Prasanta Sahoo. *World Focus*, op. cit.

¹⁶ Ali Riaz. *Asian Profile*, op. cit.

¹⁷ Ibid

The Awami League's shift in this direction seemed to denote something more than a political tokenism. At the beginning, especially in the early 1990s, this was described as a tactical move, but soon it graduated into a strategy, and now ostensibly it has become the ideological position of the party.

Thus by 2001, Islam as a political ideology had become a part of the Bangladesh polity. Over the preceding years, the Islamists forces in general and the Jamaat-e-Islami in particular have not only gained recognition as legitimate political actors but have also emerged as kingmakers both in the electoral equation and on the ideological terrain.

The role of the two major political parties (BNP and Awami League) seems to have become hostage to the Islamists in their pursuit to power. They have courted the Islamists and used the state apparatus to Islamize society, leaving very little space for dissenters, secularists, and pluralism. Furthermore, they have immensely contributed to the gradual Islamisation of public discourse by infusing rhetoric with Islamic vocabulary and symbols, creating a climate where extremism can flourish without hindrance.¹⁸

The growing trend within Bangladesh society of tolerating and accepting a particular interpretation of Islam is being continually redefined by the state and socio-religious organizations linked to the Islamists. The increasing presence of religion in everyday life can be recognized by looking closely at the dress codes, the extent of silent censure, the sensibility about acceptable female behaviour, and the efforts to curtail particular modes of comportment/manner.¹⁹

The "Pakistan" had been born on the basis of Jinnah's "Two Nations Theory". The poison of fundamentalism in the 23 years of being with Pakistan, the uprising Muslim society looked for a separate, independent identity. In spite of earning the independence from the economic oppression by the Pakistan, the nourished sectarian, fundamentalist consciousness in the womb of the "Two nations Theory" which was planted in the heart

¹⁸ Ali Riaz, *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh*, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ *Ibid*

of the Muslims of this country, the secular, progressive, non-communal freedom struggle could not destroy the root of it. And that's why the great Freedom struggle and the liberation movement within a short period turned into erroneous nationalism and the freedom struggle, the struggle to build nation conducted towards establishing religion based nationalism.

There is hardly any doubt that the influence of Islam has become more pervasive and the need for the establishment of an ideal Islam is felt even at the highest level. The main objective of most of the Islamic groups including a host of socio-cultural organizations is not only the immediate establishment of an Islamic state but an Islamic society through gradual transformation. The creation of an Islamic society, they hold, will facilitate the establishment of an Islamic state. Consciously or unconsciously the government measures are also helping the cause of Islam in Bangladesh.

After the independence of the country, our happiness, delight, sorrow and regret could not stay permanent. In the free space/air of independence no quality of ours manifested rather our characteristic weakness has been revealed. Today it's been seen around that, we are living in a famine condition. This famine is not only of food but also of character. And the latter (Character) is the main reason. Before independence we have seen such bold leadership, but we never imagined that, they would be proved as fragile and weak after the independence.

The ineffective role of Left Parties to fight against fundamentalism

In August, 1972, *Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani* who was a leader of radical left party, called a press conference of journalists and he declared there that, 'India is Bangladesh's main enemy. India wants to make Bangladesh as their dependent and adopted state, and it is looting all resources. The Mujib government is having a secret pact with India, and it is a puppet government of India.' And he also called for an armed struggle against the government.

His party's weekly paper "Hak Katha" started propagating anti-India propaganda.

Maulana Bhashani is a debatable figure in Bangladesh politics. Before 1970's election he called masses to build "Bigger/Integral Bengal" constituted by Assam, West Bengal and Meghalaya's Muslim population, and he also declared that without establishing it he does not want to go to Independent Bangladesh but wanted to stay in "independent East Pakistan". He always talked about Islamic Bengal, not secular Bengal. *Khandakar Muhammad Ilias* who was Maulana Bhashani's political associate/comrade commented on Bhashani's demand on "Independent East Pakistan" in his book that, Maulana Bhashani's demand is not "Independent Bangladesh", not "Joy Bangla", his demand is for 'independent East Pakistan' his demand is not for struggle, not for acquiring freedom through struggle. It is needless to comment that the demand for independent East Pakistan rather than independent Bangladesh has unveiled his fundamentalist nature, and also it gives hint towards an intricate, far involved conspiracy.²⁰

In 1971 the American ambassador of Dhaka and Chinese representative suggested Maulana Bhashani not to go to India, but he took shelter in India. He was also a member of the advisory committee of the First Government of Bangladesh (temporary).²¹

A rumour had been spread that, he was kept in house arrest in India. By not protesting against these rumours he indirectly stoked/encouraged the anti-Bangladesh, anti-liberation fundamentalist power.

Maulana's anti-India speeches encouraged the anti-liberation, anti-Bangladeshi, rightist reactionary fundamentalist people to take shelter under his parasol. After 1973's election he asked to change the national flag, and demanded for the release of those Pakistani collaborators who were imprisoned by the Bangladeshi government because of their clear involvement in the genocide created by the Pakistani government and army. He also suggested creating friendly relationship with Pakistan and showed his interest to take the initiative. The fundamentalist and communal power surrounding him started raising their voice openly for "Muslim Bengal" and asked for abolition of the government.

²⁰ Khandakar Muhammad Ilias. *The Philosophical Background of Mujibism and its Scientific Foundation*. Page-226. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

²¹ Nabarun Sengupta. "Scenery". *Desh*, Vol. 39. No. 48, September 2, 1972.

The frustrations of the communists and leftists with the problems created for them by religion, is often betrayed by their political spokesmen. Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani who had been public spokesman of the pro-Peking leftists for years always talked of “Islamic Socialism”. Professor Mujaffar Ahmad of National Awami Party (NAP), pro-Moscow, resorted to a new theme for his party-‘Dharma, Karma, Samajtantra-NAP er tin mantra’ (religion, hard work and socialism-the three principles of NAP).

Sheikh Mujib’s vacillating approach to socialistic principles, practically immobilized his party. To overcome this ineffectiveness, the Awami League formed an alliance with the less radical political parties such as the National Awami Party (Muzaffar) and the pro-Soviet Bangladesh Communist Party (Moni Sinha). The alliance was known as Gono Oikko Jote (Popular United Front) and a central committee was formed with the representatives of three political parties in the proportion of 11: 5: 3. The main aim of this Front was to fight the radical parties at the political level and to prevent the “criminal activities of the anti-state elements and help improve the law and order situation in the country.” This alliance however proved totally ineffective, and Bangladesh thus slowly but steadily turned into a praetorian polity.²²

The Communist party of Bangladesh also set history by giving their confidence support to Zia, which mortified the impression of the party. But in the third Congress of the party confessed that, it was a wrong decision to take part in the plebiscite and casting confidence voting from their side.

The Peking model followers, radical left were against the freedom struggle in 1971 also started saying in Zia’s regime that, India intervened and stopped the freedom struggle when it was not the time, and also established their puppet government in power. The radical left also denied acknowledging Sheikh Mujib’s preface/contribution in the liberation movement.

²² See Chapter Four for details.

With numerous divisions and ineffectiveness in the communist camp, fundamentalist, sectarian strength among the burgeoning middle class and lower middle classes increased.

The role of Civil Society

The student section

The noble young groups of the country influenced by the noble values and consciousness in 1970-1971 involved themselves in the movement and struggle against the evil regime of Pakistan. The politicians, intellectuals of the country only confined themselves to sloganeering against fundamentalism in the political field and publishing scholarly essays in the literary journals.

The dominant motive force of the national liberation movement in Bangladesh was the middle section on whose behalf students played the most significant role in the liberation movement. In fact, the students remained, throughout the period of the first phase as the base of the national liberation movement.²³ The student section of the society had shown their continuous effort, struggle against oppression, undemocratic, fundamentalist behaviour of the political parties, groups in the country time to time in 1990, 2005, 2006, and 2007.

The Freedom fighters

The aim of the freedom struggle was political; the end of it was also political. And that's why the freedom fighters were politically conscious, they can not be apolitical. So that's why political training was needed for them on the basis of the primary principles of the country that is secularism, socialism, democracy and nationalism. But that did not take place. Without that political training, they entered in all sorts of political parties and they started engaging themselves in politics.

²³ S.R. Chakravarty, "The National Liberation Movement: Problems and Prospects." P- 8. *op. cit*

It's a matter of regret that, within thirty seven years of the country's independence the freedom fighters could not unite themselves on the basis of consciousness of the 1971's freedom struggle, on which platform they took part in the liberation movement unitedly. There are so many different organizations of the freedom fighters like, three different faction of "Muktijodha Sansad" (Freedom Fighters Association), "Muktijodha Sanghati Parishad" (Freedom Fighters Integration Council", "Muktijodha Sangram Parishad" (Freedom Fighters Struggle Council) so and so forth.

Civil society organizations and the media depicted the confrontational politics as destructive, urging the two main parties to engage in dialogue to reach a consensus on issues of national interest and on basic principles of democratic competition, but failed to elicit any positive response. However civil society organizations and the media did succeed in bringing some transparency to the state of politics and administration. Through investigative journalism, newspapers highlighted the problems facing the country. Their reports exposed the deteriorating law and order situation, corruption, the criminalization of politics, and inefficiencies in administration.²⁴ Despite successive governments' regressive policies, some of the NGO's brought economic empowerment to the poorest of villages.

Despite the resilience of civil society, less well documented and far less explored in the growing trend within Bangladesh society of tolerating and accepting a particular interpretation of Islam that is being continually redefined by the state and socio-religious organizations linked to the Islamists. The country went through so many times the Martial Law, military regime and religious intolerance and militancy has increased dramatically. The following discussions will focus on the reasons for having so many coups, insurgency followed by generals in power and fundamentalist trends have been fueled by them.

²⁴ Rounaq Jahan. "Bangladesh in 2003: Vibrant Democracy or Destructive Politics?", *Asian Survey*. *op. cit.*

The rise of Jamaat –E-Islami: the main fundamentalist Islamic organization of Bangladesh and Minorities

The Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh's fundamentalist Islamic organization and political party, aimed at bringing about an Islamic revolution in the country through the implementation of Islamic ideology as interpreted by its ideologue the late Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi. Maududi's Islamic revolution does not aim at reformation of Islam but at a 'renaissance'-return to the pristine purity of Islam in its golden age under the religio-political leadership of the Prophet and first four Caliphs. His formulation of Islamic ideology follows a literal interpretation of the Koran and Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet). Jamaat's purpose thus, was to expose the hollowness of the Islamic modernists' reform and to fight a long-drawn battle against secularism whether in liberal democratic form or in modern communist cloak.

Launched in former East Pakistan in the mid-fifties by a few disciples of Maulana Maududi, the Jamaat had already become a political force by 1970. In 1968-69, Jamaat had about 425 full members and 40,000 associate members in East Bengal.²⁵

In the elections of 1970 totally dominated by Bangladeshi Nationalism, the Jamaat secured about 10 percent of the votes cast (about 1,400,000 ballots) and emerged as the second largest party after AL, which received a far larger percentage of the ballot (72.57 percent). The significance of Jamaat's success could be gauged from the fact that all other Islamic parties including various factions of the Muslim League together secured 7.85 percent of votes cast.²⁶

Today's Jamaat and its founder Moududi's actions are highly debatable in the history. Moududi in the first period of his life used sacred Islam in the favour of Nizam of Haidarabad's self-interest. From 1937 to 1947 period he again used Islam in the favour of Britishers colonial/imperialist interest and power. He also once declared that, there is no

²⁵ U.A.B Rajia Akter Banu, "Jamaat-i-Islami: The Fundamentalist Islamic Movement in Bangladesh", paper presented at the International Conference on "Islam, Communalism and Modern Nationalism" at Belagic, Milan, Italy, held in April, 1981, p. 6. Quoted in Talukder Maniruzzaman. *The Bangladesh Revolution and its Aftermath*. Dhaka. Bangladesh Books International. 1980.

²⁶ Talukder Maniruzzaman. *The Bangladesh Revolution and its Aftermath*. Dhaka, *op. cit.*, p. 73

dispute between British imperialist/colonial power and Islam. Pre-Pakistan period he and his Jamaat used Islam as a weapon in the favour of rich, business and feudal class's interest establishment/ protection. Pre-Liberation, Freedom Struggle period, in spite of Jamaat's contemptible and barbarous action, the post-1975 governments of Bangladesh imprudence helped towards Jamaat's self-appearance, powerful establishment of its roots in Bangladesh.

In Abul-al-Moududi's writings in post-Haidarabad period, it has been seen that he has given a special explanation of "Islam and Muslim". He says that, in the vision of Islam, who uproots "Gayeb Ilahi", or the government opposing/contending Islam and establishes "Ilahi" government and struggles for the Allah's law-norms based country rule instead of human built laws-norms, are the real Muslims/ members of the Muslim community. The parties who do not follow this are not pro-Islam and it is not legal to call them Muslim community.²⁷

Opposed liberation movement against Britishers

He opposed the liberation movement against Britishers, and by opposing the united freedom struggle he says that, is it necessary for our aims and goals to establish own nations and own country rule/government? Our only objective is terminating the autonomy of human beings and establishing the rule of Allah sent reasons and justice. I think it is more hateful to serve slavery of "Ajadi" nationalism (nationalism for independence) than serving slavery to Britishers.²⁸

In fact those, whose political foundation is fundamentalism, can not go above the narrow fundamental ideas. Their vision /outlook become conservative, narrow and imperialist dependent and fulfill the particular groups self interest. And that's why wagging the tail behaviour takes place in favour of the colonial power. And the same role of them we can see in the freedom struggle of Bangladesh against Pakistan.

²⁷ Maolana Moududi, *Siashi Kashamkash*. Part-3. p-94. Quoted in Maolana Abdul Aouwal, *The Real Face of the Jamaat*. Agami Publishers, Dhaka. Bangladesh. February. 1993.

²⁸ Maolana Moududi, *Siashi Kashamkash*. Part-3 & 1. p-108 &56. Quoted in Maolana Abdul Aouwal. *op. cit.*

Maolana Moududi criticized Muslim League and Congress both and called them Islam contending/opposing parties; the biggest enemy of the Islam and Muslims. He also in strict language criticized Muslim League leadership by saying that, they do not have any right to take the name of Islam for this Nationalist Movement because Islam stands against all sorts of nationalism, and it is the same for Indian Nationalism or Muslim Nationalism.²⁹

Just before the independence in 1946, in the February edition of the “Tarjamanul Koran” he says that, if independent Pakistan born, it is going to be established on democratic secular state-principle. And then the non-Muslims will be getting the equal rights like Muslims, and that’s why the number and power of representation is also not going to be weak and insignificant, so it would not be possible to make the Islami Shariat as states laws and Koran as the states constitution.³⁰

And after the establishment of Pakistan Maolana Moududi was obliged to come to Lahore, Pakistan from the Pathankote of the East Punjab and by forgetting his previous position on independence declared that, he did not oppose the idea of Pakistan, but opposed Muslim League.³¹

Forming Jamaat-E-Islami

In 1941, on 26th August he formed Jamaat-E-Islami. And he narrated the principles and objectives of the Jamaat-E-Islami by saying that, for us Islam is only the movement and the Islamic invitation to the entire people of the world. So any special nation or countries temporary problems are not our concern. But our focus is extended towards the entire humanity.³²

²⁹ Barbara D. Metcalf, *op. cit.*

³⁰ Maolana Abdul Aouwal, *op. cit.*

³¹ Barbara D. Metcalf, *op. cit.*

³² Maolana Abdul Aouwal, *op. cit.*

He was influenced by Nazism and Fascism; that has been proved in his writings. In 1934, in the December edition of “Tarjamanul Koran” he writes that, ‘Today we are having the examples of Germany and Italy before us. Hitler and Mussolini captured such great power what has been acknowledged in the whole world. The reason of this success is to be obedient to two things, those are faith and order. They would not have so successful powerful if they were not having unflinching faith on their own principles and not strictly obedient to their leaders.’³³

Contradictory position on the issues

In 1954, on 9th May Pakistan and America signed a military pact with each other. Jamaat-E-Islami opposed the pact on the basis of the countries autonomy. But within a year in 1955, 22nd November Maolana Moududi talks in favour of the military pact, and from that time onwards Jamaat started getting big amounts of financial support from America.³⁴

On the issue of women rights he explained by taking the help of Koran that, the women being council’s or the parliament member, taking part in social service outside home, working with men, co-education, nursing all are clearly prohibited in sacred Koran. So in the Islamic outlook the women do not have any scope to take part in all these.³⁵

But Maolana Moududi and Jamaat just for power by forgetting their Islamic explanation, analysis about women, in 1965 supported the women presidential candidate Ms. Fatema Jinnah.

The role against the Independence of Bangladesh

In 1971, when Pakistan Government and Army came down to East Pakistan for “Operation Search Light” (A planned killing/massacre of Intellectuals, Engineers, Doctors, Academicians, Literary figures of the nation) and till December, 1971 in the killing expedition and oblation by Pakistani Army, the Jamaat-E-Islami served a full-

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid And also see Barbara D. Metcalf. *op. cit*

³⁵ Maolana Moududi. *Tahhimul Koran*. p-46. Quoted in Maolana Abdul Aouwal. *op. cit*.

fledged support and co-operation to them. On 4th April, 1971 only Golam Azam (Ameer of Jamaat-E-Islami) met General Tikka Khan (the main brain behind the whole killing expedition) and assured him to give support and cooperation to bring back the normal condition in the whole province. Again on 6th April, Golam Azam met Tikka Khan and says that, this liberation movement is basically an Indian intervention/interference and infiltration, and to flout India's motive the patriots of the province will help the armed force.³⁶

On 10th April they (Pakistan Government and Jamaat-E-Islami) formed "Shanti Committee" (Peace Committee) to nip in the bud the freedom struggle of Bangladesh. On 15th April, the Provincial Peace Committee had been formed, and Golam Azam nominated as the third member of it and the convener was Khaja Khoyeruddin of the council of the Muslim League.³⁷

The Jamaat-E-Islami not only wanted to eradicate the freedom struggle but also they wanted to uprooted the Bengali Nation by forming "Razakar and Al-Badar Bahini" (two Pakistani collaborator groups) who helped the Pakistani armed forces to kill the intellectuals and the educated Bengali's. By the name of Islam and Muslim nationalism Jamaat's motive was to destroy the Bengali national existence. Jamaat wanted the undivided Pakistan, and also wanted to prevent/obstruct the path of socialism and secularism what the Bengali nationalism and leadership, common people were going for. The formed "Razakar Army division" what was through Jamaat's self efforts, the Pakistan Military Government promotioned/matured it to a demi-military force within a short period. The Razakar force members had been trained for three to four weeks by the Pakistan Government and been armed by supplying 303 rifle.

Jamaat-E-Islami's Razakar Army Division got the support from all the Pro-Pakistani political parties. They also formed another volunteer armed force called "Al-Badar" to eradicate the freedom struggle. The Badar force had been formed for the first time in the

³⁶ *Daily Pakistan*, 7th April, 1971. Quoted in Maolana Abdul Aouwal, *op. cit.*

³⁷ *Daily Pakistan*, 16th April, 1971. Quoted in Maolana Abdul Aouwal, *op. cit.*

end of April, 1971 in Jamalpur. The force was formed in the synthesis of educated Jamaat and Islamic Student Union in the motive of uprooting the Bengali secular community.

The force was managed under the leadership of Jamaat. The Badar force had their camps in every districts and sub-districts. In this camp they used to brutally torture and kill the pro-liberation minded Bengali's. In the last days towards the liberation/independence, the university teachers/professors, doctors, writers, journalists, government officers, educated lower pay-schemed service holders, distinguished citizens of the state, each and everyone were under the prey of Badar force. Their main objective was a preplanned eradication of the cultural, political root of Bengali's through a scientific carnage. The Badar force's endeavored carnage was in the accordance of the East-Pakistan's non-military Governor's advisor General Rao Farman Ali's blueprint. The Badar Force was looked after and managed by Golam Azam and its exposed leaders were present General Secretary of Jamaat's Matiur Rahman Nijami (Chief of overall Pakistan), the Ameer of Dhaka city Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujahid (Provincial Chief), the Nayeb-E-Ameer of Dhaka city Mir Kashem Ali (the third leader) and Central Publicity Secretary Muhammad Kamruzzaman (Chief Organizer).

The General Secretary of Islamic Student Union of East-Pakistan Mir Kashem Ali, put before three courses of action on the "Oath of Badar Day". They were- a) to prevent India's attack, b) to murder all the criminals c) to make firm/permanent the Islamic society. In the gathering, the slogans had been shouted were- "Pakistan will remain through our blood", "the hero Mujahids, hold arms and finish India", "the Mujahid's go ahead, and possess Calcutta" and "finish the Indian spies" etc.³⁸

After the independence, the Freedom Fighters handed over their arms to the government of Bangladesh, but the Jamaatees, Rajakar, Al-Badar force members did not voluntarily handed over their arms. It's been said that, the Pakistani army after their decision to surrender/capitulate, handed over a huge number of arms and explosive stuffs. In 1972, in

³⁸ *Daily Pakistan*, 8th November, 1971. Quoted in Maolana Abdul Aouwal, *op. cit.*

Lahore, under the leadership of Golam Azam, the “East Pakistan re-developed committee” had been formed.

Jamaat-E-Islami's emergence in Bangladesh

In 1973, Bongobondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman freed the war criminals of 1971 from the punishment for their despicable involvement and collaboration with Pakistani army to kill more than 30 lakhs people of East Pakistan, rape, destruction, and creating genocide, resulted in the establishment and rehabilitation of the anti- liberation, fundamentalist power in the political and societal arena within two years of independence.

General Zia-Ur-Rahman brought the Fifth Reformation of the constitution, which legalized the despicable role/involvement and the killings, loots, rape by them. The 1976's “the regulations of the political party ordinance” also gave the space to them to appear as a political party, to re-establish them and to start their activities in Bangladesh. The parties were- Muslim League, Islamic Democratic League, Jamaat-E-Islami, Nejam-E-Islam and Khilafat-E-Rabbani party. Golam Azam got the permission to come back to Bangladesh in Zia's regime (after the independence in 1973, on 22nd April his nationality and citizenship was rejected/cancelled).

In 1979, on 25th, 26th and 27th May, in Dhaka Jamaat-E-Islami reappeared themselves. Golam Azam became the Ameer of the party. General Iyaha's last Governor Abdul Malik's one of the Minister Abbas Ali Khan, nominated as the temporary Ameer and Maolana Yusuf nominated as the Secretary General. In independent Bangladesh, in 1980 on 10th February at the Baitul Muqqaram Mosque, Jamaat-E-Islami organized its first public meeting. In 1980, on 7th December the temporary Ameer on the behalf of the party declared that, in 1971 for the well-being of the country and the nation, what we have done was correct. The concept of Bangladesh in 1971 was wrong.

Got opportunity/space to join the main stream political platform with other political parties

In 1983 (in January), the movement started by the students against the military Regime, and the movement reaches its height. The labor, workers, different service-holders, intellectuals too joined the movement. The fifteen and seven party caucus had been formed for the need of the movement. And these two political caucuses came out with fifth installment of common demands and on the basis of this unanimity, they formed twenty two political party structures what shook the Ershad regime. The united twenty two party caucuses first boycotted the dialogue with regime, and Jamaat-E-Islami took the opportunity and also boycotted it. The twenty two party caucuses were neutral about Jamaat's joining the movement by forgetting their role/actions. And also the 7 party caucus's main political party BNP had shown their interest to keep Jamaat in their caucus. The seven and fifteen party caucus both started thinking Jamaat as their ally of the movement to re-capture the democracy.

Not only from the opposition parties but, Jamaat started getting concessions by the 1975 afterwards government of Bangladesh for their own political benefits.

The different organizational bodies of Jamaat

Jamaat-E-Islami formed a lot of different organizational bodies and co-operative bodies. One of them is "Chatra Shibir" (Student Camp) The Islamic Student Union of pre-1971 only re-appeared as the "Chatra Shibir" in 1977. There are four layers of its organizational structure, they are- supporters, workers, friends and members. Through the schools, Madrassa's and kindergarten the wing makes their foundation and started increasing their power. They have a children organization called "Ful-Kuri Ashor" what was formed in 1978, on 17th December. In 1988, in 20 districts this children organization was having 34 brunches and they are having more than five thousand members. The expenditure function of the organizations was eighteen lakh takas in 1979-80.

The party members launched quite a few numbers of Trusts in Dhaka which ran again a good number of private schools in Dhaka and each districts in Bangladesh. These schools providing modern as well as Islamic education are serving as the laboratories for the production of ‘modern soldiers of Islam’.

The Jamaat has a girls wing too what is known as “Islamic Girls Student Association”. In 1978, on 15th July it had been formed on the basis of the suggestion of Matiur Rahman Nijami. There is another body of Jamaat called “Jubo-Shibir” (Youth Camp), and also women, workers and other branches. Their programmes include measures like holding talks, seminars, group discussions, work camps and social activities aimed at arousing Islamic consciousness among the youth. Shibir workers are known to be disciplined as they put stress on character building-they have also established international contact through similar organizations in other Muslim countries like Students Islamic societies in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia. They were encouraged by the party’s success in the Chittagong University Central Students Union and stepped up activities in Dhaka, while their appeal for the reconstruction of society along fundamental lines won a limited following among the student population (Shibir sources claim that the number is steadily increasing).

In 1975, by the initiative of Golam Azam, Jamaat formed an Armed Cadre named “Momenin Salehin”. The members of the body get their training in Jhinaidaha and Natore, and also the other parts of Chittagong of the country.

Jamaat also started a few commercial publishing firms and a large number of socio-cultural organizations. Jamaat has “Falah-Um-Trust” and “Shatabdi Press”. The pro-minded Jamaat people are everywhere in the country, in different organizations they are present with their perspective. Some organizations can be named- Bengali Literature Council, Islamic Education Society, Farmers well-being Association, Daily Sangram, Darul Islam Trust, Weekly Sonar Bangla, Rabeta Alam-E-Islam (Social welfare

organization), Islamic Bank, Modern press, and so many other social, cultural and economic organizations.³⁹

The two publishing firms, run by Jamaat-E-Islami, flooded the market with the works of Syed Abdul Ala Maududi in English and Bengali translations. The government financed Islamic foundation did not lag behind. Run by two of the most dedicated Islamic scholars of Bangladesh, the publication department of the Foundation published 680 titles of 'scholarly' and popular books on various aspects of Islam during 1979-81, a work unique in magnitude and dimension, which no country in the Muslim world can possibly claim to have performed in a short span of two years. The foundation had been selling these books at a loss because, as its publication brochure states, the Foundation 'is an enterprise to lose, particularly in view of the fact that tons and tons of books on other ideologies in the best print and finest paper and colours are being distributed free in this country.'⁴⁰

The Jamaat is also working underground to fight modern secularism.

The source of Jamaat's fund

It's been said that, there are twenty channels from where Jamaat collects crore and crore takas. Daily Bichitra on 26th June, 1987 says that, the main source of the activities of Jamaat a huge amount of the foreign currency. Jamaat is the only political organization of Bangladesh who has more than fifty body organizations and more than hundred business organizations.

A document of Islamic Student Camp says that, for two years the Islamic student Camp's expenditure had been shown overall five lakhs eighty eight thousands five hundred thirty three US dollar. What will be in Bangladeshi takas, two crores five lakhs ninety eight thousand six hundred ninety five only.

On 26th June, 1987 daily Bichitra says that, Jamaat receives a huge amount of petro-dollar from Saudi Arab's monarch government. So the question arises in mind that, why

³⁹ Maolana Abdul Aouwal, *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ Publications of the Islamic Foundation: Bangladesh, Dhaka. Bangladesh. 1981. p.v.

the donor countries donate so much of money to Jamaat, what is the motive and what Jamaat does with so much of money.

This huge amount of money spending for political objectives is against the current rules and regulations of the country. And also it has an adverse impact to the country's economy like currency inflation, it also fuels to devalue the currency. But the government mystifyingly is not taking any legal action against it.

Rise of Islamic militant groups

According to a newspaper report, intelligence sources suspected that at least forty-eight training camps of ten militant organizations were operating inside the country.⁴¹ These militant organizations presence and heightened activities in recent times seems to be a growing trend toward Islamism within mainstream politics. Juxtaposed with menacing pronouncements made by leaders of the ruling coalition (2001), shrinking space for secular idioms in local political discourse and a continuous weakening of secular forces, all these recent events make a worrisome picture.

Events since the general election of October 2001, which brought a centre-right coalition to power with a two-thirds majority, have been pointing to disturbing developments. Within six months after the election, religious minorities faced violence, intimidation and destruction in the face of denials by the government, while its supporters engaged in horrific acts of looting, driving religious minorities, especially Hindus away from their homes in various parts of the country.

The coalition, led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), includes two Islamic fundamentalist parties: the Jamaat-E-Islami and the Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ, Islamic United Front), having expressed solidarity with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

⁴¹ *Daily Prothom Alo*. "10 Militant Organizations Have 48 Training Camps Throughout the Country". Dhaka. March 14, 2003

Countrywide spate of bombings and suicide attacks took place which killed at least thirty people and injured one hundred and fifty between August and December, 2005 by Islamic militant groups. Bangladesh court sentenced to death six senior Islamic militants including the chiefs of two outlawed groups-Shaikh Aatur Rahman of Jama'at-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (Organization of the Holy Warriors, JMB) and Siddiqui Islam 'Bangla Bhai' (while a cabinet member and Ameer (chief) of the Jamaat-e-Islami denied the existence of any such individual) of the Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (Awakened Muslim People of Bangladesh, JMJB).⁴² But it should be noted that, there has been failure to follow through on information the militants have supposedly given to police of senior political and professional names involved in masterminding their activities.

A series of bomb blasts on August 17, when within the space of 45 minutes at least 450 bombs exploded in 63 out of the country's 64 districts. Some 640 alleged militants have been detained and over two hundred have been charged for involvement in the August 17 bomb blasts. The JMB banned militant Islamists organization claimed responsibility for masterminding the simultaneous explosion of some 450 to 500 small bombs right across Bangladesh and also behind the wave of suicide bombings in Gazipur and Netrokona in the north and the south eastern port city of Chittagong. Leaflets found near the blast sites demanded that Islamic rule be established soon.⁴³ After the attack, intelligence agencies discovered a well-organized network of militant Islamists supported by a number of International Islamic non-governmental organizations.⁴⁴ The February 23, 1998 'Declaration of Jihad against Jews and crusaders' by Osama bin-Laden was also signed by Fazlul Rahman, the head of the Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami (HUJI) of Bangladesh.⁴⁵

⁴² Ali Riaz, *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh*, *op. cit.* And also see Hiranmay Karlekar, *Bangladesh: The Next Afghanistan?*. Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, India, 2005.

⁴³ Ali Riaz. "Bangladesh in 2005: Standing at a Crossroads." *Asian Survey*, Vol. 46, No.1, Jan-Feb-2006
And also see Charulata Hogg, "Bangladesh: Unconvincing Crackdown." *The world Today*, Vol. 62, No.7, July 2006

⁴⁴ Ali Riaz. "Bangladesh in 2005: Standing at a Crossroads." *Asian Survey*, *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ Sreeradha Datta, "Bangladesh's Political Evolution: Growing Uncertainties." *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.27, No.2, April-June 2003

Links between members of the ruling coalition (2001) and the shadowy militants began to be revealed. For example, Mufti Abdul Hannan, leader of the Harkat-ul-Jihad (Symbols of Jihad), a militant Islamists organization connected to a similar Pakistani militant group, who was sentenced in 2003 in absentia to life imprisonment and arrested on October 1, 2005, claimed that he had been given assurances by the former Home Minister that he could safely stay within the country.⁴⁶ In apparent retaliation to his arrest, militants attacked five local courts in three districts two days later and vowed to stage more attacks. The government finally banned the organization on October 17, 2005.⁴⁷ The group wants the introduction of Sharia (Islamic Law) and has been targeting organizations and individuals it accuses of advancing a secular, anti-Islamic agenda.

According to the Intelligence Agency the militant organizations are in Bangladesh having their activities are Jama'at-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, Shahadat-e-Al Hikma, Jamaat-e-Yahiya Al Turat, Hijbut Taowheed, Al Harakat Al Islamia, Al Markajul Al Islami, Jama'at-ul Falaya, Towheedi Janata, World Islami Front, Jummatul Al-Sadat, Shahadat-e-Nabuiyat, Harkat-ul-Jihad, Al Harmain, Allah's Party, Jaish-e-Mustafa Bangladesh, Jihad Bangladesh and World Islamic Front for Jihad.⁴⁸

Incidents of murder, abduction, bombing and other criminal activities reached unprecedented levels, culminating in an assassination attempt on former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed on August 21 in an Awami League rally in Dhaka. The grenade attacks, evidently well coordinated and planned, cost 20 lives, including that of a senior leader of the Awami League. Hundreds were injured in the incident. Additionally, targeted attacks were made on a number of high-profile individuals, including the British high commissioner. The World Bank's country director left Bangladesh after receiving a death threat. A member of parliament, former finance minister Shah A.A.M.S Kibria (was killed along with four others in a grenade attack on January 27 after speaking at a

⁴⁶ *The Daily Star*, "Mufti Hannan Captured: Militant Kingpin Tells of Altaf's Assurance of 'no fear'". Dhaka. October 2, 2005

⁴⁷ Ali Riaz. "Bangladesh in 2005: Standing at a Crossroads." *Asian Survey*, *op. cit.*

⁴⁸ *Daily Janakantha*. Dhaka. 19th August. 2003 And also see Shariar Kabir, *Human Rights and Fundamentalism in Bangladesh*. Charulipi Publication, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2003.

public rally in the northeastern district of Habiganj) and a former lawmaker, both Awami League activists, and two journalists were killed in broad daylight. A prominent writer, Humayun Azad, known for his critical views of Islamists, was attacked. Incidents of grenade blasts in shrines, cinema halls, and other public places became common, and several arms caches have been discovered by police. In one instance, officers seized 10 truckloads of rocket launchers, hand grenades, AK-47 rifles, and 1.8 million bullets. But law enforcement agencies have failed to arrest the perpetrators, and the ruling coalition (2001) has blamed the violence on the opposition, without presenting any concrete evidence.⁴⁹

Southern Bangladesh (Chittagong and Cox Bazaar) has become a haven for hundreds of jihadis in the land. They find natural allies in Muslim guerrillas from India hiding across the border, and in Muslim Rohingyas, tens of thousands of whom fled the ethnic and religious suppression of the Burmese military junta in the late 1970s and 80s.⁵⁰

While BNP government was power in the early 1990s, the Bangladesh government did allow the ULFA (United Liberation Front of Asom) to operate from the country. Portrayal of militants as 'freedom fighters' by the BNP in the past, has provided a political climate for a possible shift in Bangladeshi policy. The return of BNP to power in 2001 had shown the renewal of this tolerance towards militant activities.⁵¹

The Minority condition

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Ethnic Groups

Bengali nationalism as envisaged and practiced by the ruling party sought to marginalize the non-Bengali minority in general and tribal groups/nationalities in particular. The debate in the Constituent Assembly on October 25, 1972, while discussing Article 14 of

⁴⁹ Ali Riaz. *Asian Survey*. Vol. 45, No. 1, Jan/Feb 2005. *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ Sreeradha Datta. "Bangladesh's Political Evolution: Growing Uncertainties." *Strategic Analysis*. *op. cit.*

⁵¹ Sreeradha Datta. "Bangladesh Elections: a Preliminary Assessment." *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.25, No-8, November. 2001

the proposed constitution⁵², the question of ethnic minorities came to the fore. Manabendra Larma, an independent parliament member proposed that, since the Chittagong Hill Tracts were a tribal area, to ensure that its political, economic and religious rights were not infringed upon, it should be constituted an autonomous tribal region.⁵³ Larma was dismayed by the attitude of the ruling regime and expressed his discontent. Larma's amendments were rejected on procedural grounds and his comments infuriated ruling party members. They portrayed these comments as a challenge to Bengali Nationalism.

Whether the *paharis* are a conglomerate of tribes or a nation by themselves, is a separate question altogether, but the fact remains that they are different from the plainsmen. This otherness must be respected even when they are so few in number, even when it makes us less homogeneous.

The Awami League (1996-2001) led by Sheikh Hasina highlighted as successes the Chittagong Hill Tract Peace Accord of 1997 which came in for severe criticism by the BNP.

The BNP also promised to change the Chakma accord with the objective of establishing peace in Chittagong Hill Tracts, but basically the opposite thing happened. In the light of the BNP's opposition to the CHT Accord of 1997, renewed tension and possibly increased influx of Chakmas into Tripura and Mizoram.⁵⁴

The tribal community had been attacked in Faridpur, Rishipara, Mirsarai and Bashkhali of the country in 2003.⁵⁵ The "ethnic" problem of the Chittagong Hill Tracts is another example of the minorities being marginalized and forced to take up position of confrontation. The Kaptai hydro Electric Project which benefited the plain land majority

⁵² Government of Bangladesh. 1972. Bangladesh Ganaparishader Bitarka (Debates in the Bangladesh Constituent Assembly). Vol. II. No.9. Dhaka. pp. 292-96

⁵³ See Parbatya Chattagram Janasanghati Samiti. 1988. Bangladesher Sarkar Katrik Nai Dafa Ruparekhar Bastabayaner Preksapate Janasanghati Samitir Jaruri Bibriti. Chittagong Hill Tracts.

⁵⁴ Sreeradha Datta. "Bangladesh Elections: a Preliminary Assessment." *Strategic Analysis*, *op. cit.*

⁵⁵ Respectively *Daily Bhorer Kagoj*, Dhaka. 10 May 2003, *Daily Prothom Alo*, Dhaka. 9 May, 2003, *Daily Prothom Alo*, Dhaka. 11 May, 2003 and *Daily Janakantha*, Dhaka, 10 May, 2003.

but it swamped the lands of the ethnic communities destroying their very foundation of living and livelihood. It showed how callous state power could be when it handled problems of the indigenous people.

The Ahmadiyyas (a minority sect of the Muslim community)

The Jamaat-e-Islami has been constantly demanding to have the Ahmadiyyas declared as non-Muslims and systematic attacks have been perpetrated on the Ahmadiyya centers, mosques and homes.⁵⁶

The Ahmadiyyas⁵⁷ came under virulent attack from the Khatme Nabuwat (Preservation of the Finality of the Prophet Hood of Muhammad, KN), an umbrella organization of Islamist groups, who demanded that Ahmadiyyas be declared non-Muslims. The government (2001-2006), especially the police and the local authorities, not only tolerated the KN but also helped its activists pull down signboards of Ahmadiyya mosques. In June, KN activists set fire to an Ahmadiyya mosque in Brahmanbaria, and over two dozen bombs exploded there, leaving two persons injured.⁵⁸ On 31st October the leader of the Ahmadiyya community in Jessore was brutally killed.⁵⁹

The Hindus

Enemy Property Law

In Pakistan:

In 1965, on 6th September Pakistan declared war against India: On the same day the Pakistan Government declared emergency in the overall country, and simultaneously enforced the Pakistan Defense Ordinance. On the basis of the ordinance, the Pakistan

⁵⁶ M. Anisuzzaman. *op. cit.*

⁵⁷ They are members of a Sunni subsect of less than 150,000, who have been living in Bangladesh since the 1900's. They are the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, a reformist, and are also referred to as Qadianis. (Ali Riaz, 2004)

⁵⁸ Ali Riaz, "Bangladesh in 2005: Standing at a Crossroads." *Asian Survey, op. cit.*

⁵⁹ Shahriar Kabir. *op. cit.*

Defense clauses had been enforced. Under this law, the terms 'Enemy', 'Enemy Subject' and 'Enemy Property' were defined and described. The Enemy Property (Custody and Registrations) Order 1965 and East Pakistan Enemy Property (Lands and Buildings) Administration and Disposal Order 1966 had been enforced too.

After the partition of Bengal, due to communal riots, social, political and economic reasons, lakhs and lakhs people from Hindu community took shelter in India abandoning their ancestral property and residence. And that's why the Pakistan Government one by one enforced the East Bengal Evacuees (Administration of Property) Act. VIII of 1949 ; East Bengal Evacuees (Administration of Immovable property) act XXIV of 1951; and Pakistan (administration of Evacuees Property) Act XII of 1957.

The last law of 1957 says,

"Properties of the person who is resident in any place in the territories comprising India or in any area occupied by India and is unable to occupy, supervise or manage in person his property in Pakistan or whose property in Pakistan has ceased to be occupied supervised or managed by a person".⁶⁰

Through this law a person from the Hindu community who still stayed back in Pakistan were ultimately harmed, because when one's family member went to stay in India, the whole family lost the ownership of that left family member's share of property in spite of the presence of enforced "Hindu family Law" and also "Transfer of Property Act" in Pakistan. And the Hindu's during that time staying in India temporarily, and were resident in other countries except India, their properties too were brought under the reach of the law. It is very interesting to note that, any other community member's property who left the country and staying abroad had not been brought, under the reach of the law.

After 17 days war, Pakistan and India declared the break of the war, both of the country signed a historical pact with each other named, "Tashkhand Peace pact", where India becomes no more an enemy and the Indians become no more enemy subject. After this, the Pakistan called Pakistan Defense Ordinance and Pakistan Defense clauses off, but the

⁶⁰ Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.* And also see Matiur Rehman, Syed Azizul Haq, *The Hindu Community of Bangladesh Under the Prey of Extortion.* Gyan Publishers. Dhaka. Bangladesh. February.1990.

Enemy property Law was still enacted/ continued as a law. The Enemy Property (continuance of Emergency Provision) Ordinance 1 of 1969 had been enforced by the government.⁶¹

In Bangladesh:

After independence of Bangladesh, the independent government in order not to create any vacuum of laws enforced that, on the matter of “Proclamation of Independence and Laws Continuance Enforcement Order” it has been clearly stating that,

*“The laws contrary to the independence can not exist as existing law”.*⁶²

But in spite of this statement by the government of Independent Bangladesh and also the presence of the enforced law like “Hindu Family law” and “Transfer of property Act”, the 1972’s Presidential Order named, Bangladesh (vesting of property and assets) Order continued the 1969’s Pakistan Ordinance in the case of Enemy Property Law.⁶³

In 1974, the Awami League Government enforced two laws; those are, Enemy Property (Continuance of Emergency provision) Repeat Act XLV of 1974 where the name of the Law had been changed to, Vested and Non-Resident property (Administration) Act XLVI of 1974.⁶⁴

In 1976, this law had been reformed to the Ordinance no. XCII of 1976 and had been enforced. The Ordinance says that,

*“Those properties which have had vested under the Act shall be administered, controlled, managed and disposed of by transfer or otherwise, by the Government or such officer or authority as the Government may direct.”*⁶⁵

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ Matiur Rehman, Syed Azizul Haq. *op. cit.*

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Ibid

After one year in 1977, 23rd May the Bangladesh Government enforced a circular, where the instruction and order had given to the Vested and non-Resident Property Management Committee. The order says,

*“10 kathas of vacant non-agriculture land shall be given long term lease to a person deserving to get it, raising full market values as premium and or proper rent, that non-agriculture and situated in business centre shall be settled in open auction with the highest bidder.”*⁶⁶

The no. 37 sub-clause of the order says that, if any Collector of the Collected Revenue Office of the Government in their respective areas could find out or give any information about any concealed vested property will be rewarded by the Government.⁶⁷

The no.38 sub-clause of the order says that, the Additional District (Zila) Administer (Revenue), all Administer of the sub-divided districts, Circle Officer (Revenue) and the officers of the Land Administration, Land Edition Sectors will be given honouriam.⁶⁸

The result of these orders by the Government was, for the greed for honouriam and reward, the Collectors in the villages with the help of mediators evicted the people from the Hindu community with force from their residence, property.

How the bureaucrats of the Government cruelly used/applied the law for their own benefits, the precedent comes out from the comments from the two justices,

*“It is also singularly unfortunate that officers like the Sub-divisional Officer should have passed the impugned order without applying his mind and without affording the petitioners an opportunity of being heard in that manner. It is a glaring example of extreme high handedness on the part of responsible public officials who it appears acted in utter disregard of the law they were duty bound to obey.”*⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.* And also see Matiur Rehman. Syed Azizul Haq, *op. cit.*

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury and Justice A.T.M Afzal, 31 D.L.R, p-343. Quoted in Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.*

They also said,

“Such high handedness if over looked and allowed to unchecked might undermine confidence of the citizens in the administration and bring a slur on the fair name of the Government”⁷⁰

It is important to note that, the Enemy Property Act is ultimate hindrance of the clauses of the “Municipal Law” of the United Nations. In 1980, 5th June in the parliament of Bangladesh, the Enemy (Vested) property Act annulations bill had been presented, but it was not accepted by the House for the reason of lacking necessary amount of support from the members.⁷¹ The annulling of this law will cause to hand over to the real owners, those properties what are already possessed by the influential, powerful people what is ultimate hindrance of the self-interests of these people.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court commented on this Act by saying,

“The laws on abandoned property, non-residents property and the like although enacted as temporary laws to meet peculiar and emergent situations had been continuing for indefinite time in one form or another causing untold sufferings to honest citizens and burdening the courts with unnecessary cases.”⁷²

The parliament was informed on July 4, 1991 that a total of 827,705.28 acres of land was listed as vested property. At that time, the Vested Property Act came under fire from both international and domestic human rights organizations. In response to these criticisms the BNP regime initiated a survey of vested properties in 1993⁷³. Prior to the survey, a Bengali newspaper reported that, 757,704 acres of land, 28, 768 houses and 17 shops were listed as ‘Vested Property’.⁷⁴ On the contrary, new lands were listed as ‘vested

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.* And also see Matiur Rehman. Syed Azizul Haq, *op. cit.*

⁷² Chief Justice Syed Kamal Uddin Hossain. Quoted in Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

⁷³ Ali Riaz, *Asian Profile, op. cit.*

⁷⁴ *The Bhorer Kagoj*, Dhaka. April 4, 1993

property',⁷⁵ and information gathered under the pretext of the survey were used to persecute the members of the Hindu community.

Despite changes in government the dispossessions of the Hindus continued while people with political connections seized the lands and properties owned by Bangladesh Hindus. Two studies conducted in 1990s-one in 1995 and another in 1997-by a Bangladeshi NGO named the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) estimated that total households affected by the Enemy Property Act/Vested Property Act has been 1.04 million. The studies also contend that the total area of disposed land has totaled 1.05 million acres and roughly 30 percent Hindu households have been the victims of these laws. The Ain O Salish Kendra, another NGO reveals that the members of influential political parties (BNP, AL, Jatiya Party, and Jamaat) have acquired these properties through various means. In 1995, the organization reckoned that 72 percent of the all vested property was acquired by members of the BNP, while in 1998, 44 percent was acquired by the Awami League supporters and the 32 percent by the members of the BNP.⁷⁶ Two reports published in Bengali newspaper, the *Bhorer Kagoj*, in May 1999 revealed the extent of illegal occupation by politically influential people. On May 12, the newspaper reported that in Mymensingh district, out of 29,722 acres of land listed as vested property land, 28,000 acres of land and 300 houses have been occupied by one single person. On May 17, the newspaper reported that in Sunamgonj district, out of 21,000 acres of land listed as vested property, 16,000 acres have been illegally occupied.⁷⁷ This would have been impossible without protection from the ruling party and the administration. These lands have changed hands with the changes in power. The political parties used them as a resource to be distributed among influential individuals in rural areas in exchange for their supports. Distribution of these lands has not only helped

⁷⁵ South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre (SAHRDC) contends that following the directives. 61 Hindu Families in Bogra District Alone Lost Their Properties. ('The Hindu Minority in Bangladesh: Legally Identified Enemy', Human Rights Feature, 11th January 2000).

⁷⁶ *The Daily Star*. Dhaka. 26th May 2000

⁷⁷ Ali Riaz. *Asian Profile*. *op. cit.*

to perpetuate a 'client-patron' relationship but also communalized politics as the rural level.⁷⁸

The Awami League began a process in 1998 to annul the original law. But soon the proposed bill by a parliamentary subcommittee came under severe criticisms. In September 2000, under pressure from the beneficiaries of the Act, the government formed a cabinet subcommittee to scrutinize the proposed bill. The opponents of the annulment argued that, 'the annulment of the Act in haste would adversely affect the lives of a larger number of people, the annulment will only pave the way for hundreds of thousands of Hindus who had been living in India and acquired full fledged Indian citizenship to make their claims of property inside Bangladesh. It will certainly create a dangerous confrontation between the makers of such claims and the present owners of these properties who get their property rights well established through the legal process. Thus would be fraught with grave risks for the country's overall security.'⁷⁹

The annulment bill titled 'The Vested Properties Return Act 2001' was finally presented to the parliament in March and was passed hastily in early April. The rush in passing the bill made it obvious that this was aimed at garnering support of the Hindu community for the Awami League in the upcoming parliamentary election rather than addressing the discrimination per se. The bill was passed at a time when the ruling party was about to complete its full term. It was known to them that that the bill would not become a law before the elections owing to the lack of the Presidential assent.⁸⁰ And the next government in 2001 refused to make it a law against the discrimination.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ *The Daily New Nation*, Editorial: "Vested (Enemy) Property Act", Dhaka, September 6, 2000

⁸⁰ Ali Riaz, *Asian Profile*, *op. cit.*

The migration

Under the vice-like grip of fundamentalists, Muslim majority Bangladesh is pursuing a policy of ethnic cleansing to rid the country of religious minorities and other minorities. Jamaat-e-Islami an important ally of BNP attempted to move “Blasphemy” law (copy of the law in Pakistan) in the parliament to victimize minority communities and secular sections for alleged trading of insults against Islam and Holy Koran.

Bangladesh is a country where roughly 87 percent of the country is Muslim, and in the constitution the state religion is Islam. The Hindu minority approximately comprises up to 11 percent and the remaining 2 percent are made up of other religious and ethnic minorities. At the time of partition, the Hindus constituted nearly a quarter (23 percent) of the population of erstwhile East Pakistan. The Government Census data on the population of the minority communities shows that, in 1941 the population of the minority community was 29.7, in 1951 it was 23.1, in 1961 it was 19.6, in 1974 was 14.6, in 1981 was 13.4 and in 1991 was 12.6;⁸¹

The Census gives us the clear picture of decreasing the minority population day by day and their migration trends. Now the question is why it is taking place.

On 18th November 2001 the Home Minister of Bangladesh had admitted that there were 266 murders and 213 rape cases across in October alone. According to a survey of the Institute of Democratic Rights, a non-government human rights body, 3412 people including 707 women were murdered, 309 women were victims of gang-rape out of which 99 were killed after being raped. Local press, human rights organizations and the NGO’s estimates show that at least 228 women were raped between October 1 and December 31, 2001 out of which 225 were members of Hindu community. Yet the government continued its denials which in turn encouraged the perpetrators to continue

⁸¹ Kankar Sinha. *op. cit.* p-228

the harassment and intimidation of the religious minorities. Soon Christians and Buddhists became targets as well.⁸²

Throughout time, the Hindu minority in Bangladesh has been subject to many forms of oppression. Of the forms of oppression the Hindu minority suffers from, land grabbing and property invasion is most prevalent, with many cases of rape, looting, gang beatings and murder, destruction of temples and idols. To flee from attacks and violence, many Hindus resort to migration out of their home land; therefore even more Hindus, who may not be in direct contact with the oppression, migrate out of fear, and are subject to the oppression placed upon them by their own country's governors. The Hindu minority in Bangladesh has been frequently oppressed due to the agendas and neglect of political leaders.

Migration owing to oppression has been prominent in Bangladesh with the Hindu minority. This has led to a huge influx of Bengali Hindu refugees into West Bengal. The Bangladesh Observer reported on December 5, 2001 that some 30 thousand people from five districts left their homeland and took shelter in India.⁸³ Over the last 25 years, a large number of Hindus, according to one account about 5.3 million have already left Bangladesh.⁸⁴

From 1974 to 1981, the Muslim community increased from 85.4 percent to 86.6 percent. However, the Hindu minority declined from 14.6 percent to 13.4 percent.⁸⁵

With the rise of Hindu fundamentalists in India in the 1990's, Bangladeshi politicians found it convenient to counter it with their own brand of religious politics (mirror politics) which has made the Hindus very insecure.

⁸² Ahmed Nur-e-Alam, "Almost All of Those Who Were Raped Within 92 Days Since Election Are Minorities". *Daily Janakantha*, Dhaka, February 17, 2002

⁸³ *The Bangladesh Observer*, "About 30,000 Minority People Take Shelter in India From Five Districts". Dhaka, December 5, 2001

⁸⁴ Ali Riaz., *Asian Profile*, *op. cit.*

⁸⁵ Kankar Sinha, *op. cit.*

It is evident from practices and customs evoked by the state machinery and the government which has turned into unwritten laws, that the religious minorities could not be given sensitive positions, like head of state, chief of armed forces, governor of Bangladesh Bank, Ambassador in Bangladesh Mission, secretary in the ministry of defense, Home, Foreign Affairs and Finance. Minorities are deliberately discriminated in recruitment in civil and military jobs, business and trade, bank loans and credit. The mainstream political parties equally failed to demonstrate that their leader could be from among the minority community. It is rare to find a religious minority at the helms of affairs in Bangladesh.⁸⁶

Today the socio-economic differences between the Muslim and Hindu communities are huge. Lack of socio-economic opportunities, low intensity hostility at all socio-economic levels including the state and greater opportunities across the border are the push-pull factors which have led to more than 500 Hindus crossing over the border every day.

The Anglo-Indian population in Bangladesh has literally vanished in the last 25 years. Most of them came to work in state-run establishments and British trading companies during the colonial era.

The second groups are Santals from the Barind area of Rajshahi region, are leaving the country for oppression and uprooting them from their ancestral lands.

The Christian community came under attack several times, in 1991-1992 during the Gulf War, supporters of Saddam Hossain. Muslim fanatics in Bangladesh attacked foreigners and Christian community. Several churches were attacked.

The “ethnic” problem of the Chittagong Hill Tracts is another example of the minorities being marginalized and forced to take up position of confrontation. The Kaptai hydro Electric Project benefited the plain land majority but swamped the lands of the ethnic communities destroying their very foundation of living and livelihood. It showed how callous state power could be when it handled problems of the indigenous people.

⁸⁶ Anjan Roy. “Minorities Under Threat in Bangladesh”. *World Focus*, 314, February, 2006.

Incidents of loot, arson, rape, demolition of “Mandirs” (temples), Churches by the majority community is not condemned by the government. Neither the opposition political parties agitated for justice and rational approach towards communal harmony. The parliament failed to adopt resolution condemning such acts. The criminals were not brought to justice. This has encouraged the Islamist forces to harbor racial tensions and vilify progressive forces.

Government administrative and law enforcing agencies remain mysteriously silent in rural Bangladesh and district towns, when complaints are lodge by religious minorities or killings, extortion, rape, arson, forceful eviction from properties, raiding places of worship, destruction of idols and other statues, disrupting, religious festivals. The sustained racial tensions are accompanied by death threats, pressure to sell or abandon properties of mostly Hindu community. In most case the victims remained silent in fear of further persecution.

It is evident that the true spirit and essence of democracy remains an illusion for the minorities in Bangladesh. In the name of majoritarian rule or democracy they have been marginalized politically, economically as well as culturally. The state constitution extends guarantee for the majority. The Bangladesh constitution does not reflect the existence of the cultural and ethnic minorities. Religion has been used as a tool by the political parties and politicians in Bangladesh to consolidate their power base.

From 1st October 2001 or before, violence and torture were unleashed at different places in Bangladesh on the religious minority, especially on the women and children within 7-70 years age group⁸⁷ who have experienced physical torture and molestation of all kinds. The atrocities and violence committed during this time is a gruesome and horrific record of oppression to humanity.

⁸⁷ Shahriar Kabir. *Human Rights and Fundamentalism in Bangladesh. op. cit. And also see* Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (Bangladesh Women Council), *Endangered Humanity, a Field Observation Report on Repression on Minority Hindu Women*. October 2001 to 4-5 April 2002.

Recent trends

The presence of the BNP, as a major party has thus for the first time since the demise of the Muslim League in Bengal politics after 1954 created the basis of a two-party system. There are two major political parties, the BNP and Awami League of roughly equal strength contending for state power.

The elections are basically a cosmetic exercise to legitimate the ruling elite. Even though three democratic parliamentary election were held since then (1991, 1996 and 2001), the political process is still unstable. Opportunistic alliances, immaturity of the leadership, unwillingness to recognize and accept the popular verdict and lack of a responsible opposition made the polity fragile and insecure.⁸⁸

BNP continues to retain the support of the present constituency in the form of pro-business, market oriented policy with a preference for projecting religious slogans, which made them able to emerge as an acceptable and durable right of centre party.

Two major political parties (BNP and AL) pursued a policy of expediency and lined up for the support of the Islamists at every turn. Over the past ten years, as Bangladesh returned to civilian rule and electoral politics, Islamists have emerged as the kingmakers, both in electoral and in ideological terms. This is because neither of the two major parties has yet to establish its moral leadership through consent or to construct a hegemonic ideology. In electoral politics, the Islamists have succeeded in creating a small but loyal base and in capturing the attention of the larger population because the two major claimants to power lack a clear and convincing ideological perspective and largely rely on issue-based differentiation.⁸⁹

The continued rise of political Islam as a salient phenomenon for the country has been seen. Rampant corruption and institutional decay have in recent years created a widening

⁸⁸ Sreeradha Datta, "Bangladesh's Political Evolution: Growing Uncertainties." *Strategic Analysis, op. cit.*

⁸⁹ Ali Riaz, *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh, op. cit.*

sociopolitical vacuum into which Islamists have nimbly stepped. Particularly influential in the 2001-05 BNP government was the Jamaat-e-Islami, which held 18 seats in parliament but controlled the ministries of agriculture and social welfare-two important portfolios in an impoverished agrarian society. The BNP has given the Jamaat such influential posts shows the party's electoral importance.⁹⁰

In 2001 election, the Awami League secured 22.3 million votes and the BNP 21.5 million. However the additional votes polled by the allies made the difference and gave 202 seats to the BNP led coalition. The Awami League, which fought elections alone, had to settle for only 62 seats in the 300-member House. After four Awami MPs resigned their additional seats, the party's parliamentary strength had come down to 58. The BNP's right to nominate 30 seats for women would eventually give the ruling party an absolute majority and enable it to push through far-reaching changes in Bangladesh, including constitutional amendments.⁹¹

The election process of 2001 had thrown up 1,578 candidates for 345 parliamentary seats, of which 45 were to be allocated on the basis of proportional representation to women candidates of various parties. The BNP was contesting in 236 seats, 37 candidates belonged to Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), and 13 to Islami Oikya Jote. Besides these parties, some other parties wanted to contest the poll. They included Islami Shashontantra Andolan (Islamic Rule Movement) with 137 candidates; Khilafat Movement with 29 candidates; Jamia Ulemai Islam along with Bangladesh Tariqat Foundation with 14 candidates. Thus the total number of Islamist candidates comprised 244, which was higher than the number of seats the BNP was contesting.⁹²

The main political parties with the BNP and AL usually perform well even though their religious orientation is different in intensity. The BNP is uncompromisingly Islamic oriented party. In contrast the AL's history (Mujib era) and current tactics show that it is a mixed religious bag. The sectarian Islamic parties are the JeI and IOF. In electoral

⁹⁰ Devin T. Hagerty. *op. cit.*

⁹¹ Sreeradha Datta. "Bangladesh Elections: A Preliminary Assessment." *Strategic Analysis, op. cit.*

⁹² Pinaki Bhattacharya. "New Political Phase in Bangladesh." *World Focus*, 328. April 2007

terms the first two parties are dominant, with fluctuating fortunes from election to election. The religion based sectarian parties are not electorally influential, as the table below shows.

Party	Number of votes		
	1991	1996	2001
Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)	138	116	193
Bangladesh Awami League (AL)	88	146	62
Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh	18	3	17
Islami Oikya Front	-	-	2
Bangladesh Jatiya Party	35	32	4

Table 1 : Number of votes garnered by each party out of 300 seats. The BNP won the majority in 1991 with the Jamaat-e-Islami getting 18 votes, whereas in 1996 the Awami League won the majority with 146 votes, with the Jamaat-e-Islami interestingly only managing 3 votes. In 2001 the BNP and its alliances, Jamaat and Islami Oikya Front and the Jatiya N-F party regained power with 216 seats out of 300.

Source: (http://www.bdec.org/stat/Parliament%20Election%202001%20Results%20and%20Statistics/share_of_votes_by_party.pdf).

This does not mean that the religion based parties like JeI and IOF have little influence. They influence the political process through the orientations of the dominant two parties. In the past, through BNP they led to the Islamisation of the polity. Today given the uncertain future of democracy in the wake of the interim government they are playing the same role with greater intensity.

The trends in 2007 and present time

The new caretaker government had to depend greatly on the army's support for effective administration. Indeed the army has been aiding the interim government to carry out extensive reforms in both political and administrative areas. As per constitutional schedule, Bangladesh was to hold its 9th Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) elections within 25th March, 2007. But months prior to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia led BNP coalition was to hand over powers to a caretaker government. In view of K.M Hasan ⁹³ declining to assume the post President Iajuddin Ahmed decided to head the caretaker government. This government was unable to resolve the deepening political differences and a complete breakdown of law and order was finally averted with President Iajuddin Ahmed on 11 January, 2007 evening declaring an internal emergency and resigning from the post of the advisor of the caretaker government. Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed an economist, one time World Bank official and a retired governor of Bangladesh Central Bank, serving as Managing Director of Bangladesh Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation, a public sector micro credit institution was chosen as the Chief Adviser to the second caretaker government that assumed office on 12 January together with 10 other 'technocratic' cabinet appointees.⁹⁴ Within hours of declaration of emergency, the anti corruption drive initiated by the army-led joint forces to carry out simultaneous midnight raids and arrests of political leaders especially those belonging to the BNP and Awami League. This drive led to arrests of corrupt politicians, businessman and bureaucrats many of whom are detained without legal warrants are now languishing in jail as well as demolition of illegal structures. The move by the Interim government hints at the removal from the political scene of the two women leaders, who have dominated the political scene for long. And the current state of emergency already appears to have spelt the end for these two leaders' and their parties political roles.

⁹³ The 14th Constitutional Amendment by the BNP led coalition government on 14th May, 2004 increased the age limit of Supreme Court Judges from 65 to 67 years. This enabled K.M.Hasan the BNP candidate to be eligible for the post of Chief Adviser. The opposition alliances came up with huge popular resistance against Hasan being a party member of BNP not qualifying as a neutral candidate to head the CG. In the face of huge popular resistance, Hasan was forced to decline the job on 27th October, the day Khaleda Zia was to hand over power to an interim government. (Sreeradha Datta, World Focus, April, 2007)

⁹⁴ Kirsty Hughes. *op. cit*

The biggest losers so far are Zia and her party, having been the immediate past rulers. Virtually the entire top BNP brass is behind bars including Zia's eldest son Tareq Zia, senior joint secretary general of BNP, with a good number of crucial/major corruption case against him (the younger son too has some major corruption cases against him, and is presently in jail). There is a possibility that Zia may buy her way out of the country to avoid further persecution. She would want her two sons also to be spared and allowed to leave the country.⁹⁵

The army's support to the civil interim government can no longer be viewed as being a temporary one and moreover the army's intentions and agenda are still unclear. With diminishing chances of a democratic outcome of the various reforms being undertaken, the upbeat mood of the people has now been replaced with fear and doubts. The present government looks in no hurry to make way for an elected government; not only will the electoral reforms they have undertaken take years to accomplish but also the continuation of ban on indoor politics and banning of politics in colleges and universities point towards serious attempts to curb political activity within the country. Suggestions to lift the ban and to call off the emergency are slowly gaining ground within and outside Bangladesh. The speculation is that general elections in Bangladesh would not take place before end 2008 or early 2009. Tremendous rising prices and falling foreign exchange reserves are putting the lower middle class in dismay and more sufferings.

The rapid and aggressive move in the first three months to demolish thousands of illegal roadside and pavement businesses and slum homes, leaving people homeless and penniless, is seen by many as an excessive approach to anti-corruption and one hurting the poorest rather than those higher up the corruption change. It has been pointed out that there is corruption in defense deals, and questions as to whether the military can really differentiate itself as not part of the corrupt previous system.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Mahendra Ved, "Emerging Scenario in Bangladesh", *World Focus*, 328, April, 2007

⁹⁶ Kirsty Hughes. *op. cit.*

The New Age newspaper pointed out recently:

“It is not surprising that the people, who whole-heartedly welcomed the incumbents six months ago, have started getting disillusioned about the commitment and ability of the government of the day. The pervasive atmosphere of fear, automatically generated out of the military-driven emergency, may keep the people quite for some more days, but they might burst into anger any time-the symptoms of which have already surfaced in Khalishpur and Nachole.

It is high time that the incumbents pause to review the deeds, and misdeeds, that they have committed so far.”⁹⁷

According to the Dhaka based human rights organization ‘Odhikar’ during the first 130 days of emergency from January 12 to May 21, 2007, a total of 96 persons were reportedly killed during different operations by the law enforcement personnel. In addition, 193,329 were reported arrested, inclusive of general arrests for violations of law. Of the 96 reported killed, 54 were killed by the paramilitary rapid Action Battalion (RAB), 25 by the police, seven by the joint forces, six by the army, and three by the navy.⁹⁸

June 2005, BNP led coalition government appointed the CEC (Chief Election Commissioner) M.A Aziz without any consultation with the opposition. In August 2005, the EC decided to prepare a fresh voters list for the 9th National Parliamentary Elections. In spite of High Court rule that the previous voter list should be considered as the base, in May 3rd, 2006 the EC published a draft voters list with 93 million voters, not 73 million as five years before (estimated 14 million voters’ name were missing, and 13 million more names than it should have had according to census reports) over and above the High Court rule. So it was palpably obvious that it is a bogus list, so any residue of confidence disappeared and the electoral commission lost all credibility.⁹⁹

It is significant that none of the major Jel (Jamaat-e-Islami) or other Islamist politicians have been detained. although many of them were in the government and are known to

⁹⁷ Nurul Kabir. ‘Time for Some Soul Searching’, *The New Age*. Dhaka. July 11, 2007

⁹⁸ Mukul Sharma, “Bangladesh’s Repressive Regime.” *EPW*, Vol.42. No-32, 11-17 August, 2007

⁹⁹ Kirsty Hughes. *op. cit.*

have amassed wealth during the five years in power (2001-2006). Jamaat sympathizers run three newspapers, hospitals, transport companies and banks besides small businesses.¹⁰⁰ The trends in the recent years and the run-up to the elections have shown that the Islamists, be they in JeI, or any of the smaller groups, shall remain alive and kicking no matter which government comes to power and they would be wooed by the three major political parties-BNP, AL and Ershad's Jatiya Party.

Any political ambition on the part of new interim government or a major failure by it on economic front, coupled with political unrest and things getting out of the hand could be a possibility by the armed forces to intervene directly. There is an open question as to whether the military will withdraw from its current increasingly powerful political role as and when the caretaker government moves to restore democracy, or whether it will get a taste for political power Pakistan style.

It is a time of both opportunity and danger, saying that political actors know the direction needed, but the question is whether, how and to what extent reforms are carried through. How politics will come back is a challenge to society at large, a challenge to political parties to reform them and it's a challenge to the current drivers, the caretaker government and the army, of finding how to move ahead. The issue of reformation of the electoral procedures by the CG makes the progressive and common section of the society hopeful to ban the fundamentalists and religious political parties to participate in the elections whose party principles go totally against the Bangladesh constitution by the government, for example Jamaat-e-Islami. And there also an old and valid demand has come to the forefront by the civil society to bring the Pakistani collaborators, war criminals of 1971 under justice. But again the attitude of the CG shows no interest to take care of these valid demands.

¹⁰⁰ Recently the Ameer of JeI has been caught by the government for a corruption case and put behind bars. (Daily Prothom Alo, Dhaka 30th May, 2008)

Bangladesh emerged as an independent nation through the process of a national liberation movement, which had begun in 1952 to protest against the imposition of Urdu as the official language of undivided Pakistan. Gradually this movement had taken the shape of a nation-wide struggle against the economic exploitation of the people of east Bengal by the West Pakistani based rulers. The Pakistani military crackdown on 25th March 1971, the gruesome killings indulged in by the Pakistani armed forces and their collaborators, in spite of that the bravery and courage, with which the people of East Bengal fought against the brute and massive bands of Pakistani army, have now become a glorious chapter in the history of Bangladesh's national liberation movement. Liberation of Bangladesh has indeed been a saga of tremendous sacrifices and man's right to live with dignity and honour. But its very unfortunate that the country had experienced thirty years later an election which had brought a coalition to power with two fundamentalist Islamic parties as partners like Jamaat-e-Islami, a party which openly professes 'Islamic Revolution' and calls for the establishment of an 'Islamic state' in Bangladesh, the party's activities were directly against the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 from Pakistan, and many of the party leaders and members were the collaborators of Pakistani army in killing the common people and intellectuals of the nation in 1971. The other, smaller, partner of the alliance, the Islami Oikyo Jote, is more radical having previously expressed solidarity with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The main political parties of Bangladesh BNP and AL, views Islam as an integral part of the socio-cultural life of the country. This particular dissertation seeks to analyse the why and how of Bangladesh's drift towards fundamentalist Islam and what made it possible for the fundamentalists, especially the Jamaat-e-Islami, to rise to power. Having elaborated the explanatory analytical framework with concrete historical manifestations determines and identifies the fundamental factor responsible for such phenomenal changes.

The contour of the crisis of hegemony of the ruling bloc brought the fundamentalists to the political arena of Bangladesh. So long as the crisis remains, the position of the fundamentalist parties in the polity will remain influential and Islamic idioms will dominate the political discourse of Bangladesh. Their growing influence on political

discourse, their control over a small but highly influential vote bank, and their position within the government show their pervasive influence.

Firstly the concept of fundamentalism is explored and explained. Fundamentalism is an impediment/obstacle towards human rights. The main reason for the political thought process of the Indian sub-continent built up collectively with the resorting to religion is that nationalism cohabitated with fundamentalism in the Indian politics. In the context of the reform movements and revivalist response, for example, the Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj movements, respectively Congress movement for greater jobs and representation in councils took off in 1885, the Muslims in the end of 19th century and in the 20th century took to Islam and Muslim interest, despite Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's not so Islamic positions. He wanted to import education to Muslims so that they could like the Hindus find employment and to cease to be backward. In the collective Indian life, not only for the religious reason but also economic, political and social reasons the consciousness and well being thought of the common Hindu-Muslims came under the crucial danger of fundamentalism and got paralyzed.

Chapter two looks at the history of Muslim politics during the colonial period. The educated Hindu revolutionaries wanted to establish the conjured political independence on the quicksand of the peasant-landlord divide, which basically made the Muslim tenants especially Bengalis to be aloof from the Congress nationalism. These were joined by other groups in social matrix. In their eyes it was not only the movement against Britishers but also a movement to liberate them. The freedom movement in a great extent was motivated towards the possession of the power by the educated Hindu, as they perceived it. They never wanted to give the share of the power volition to the Muslims. When the Muslims after being educated realized that they will be backward in the process of possessing power they called for a separate nationalism for Muslims that resulted in the partition of India.

Thirdly we looked at the birth of Bangladesh through its journey of being an extension of Pakistan until its eventual development of its autonomy, of its own identity. The East

Bengal Muslims always struggled and were in quest for their identity that is Bengali or Muslims. Before being successful in that search for an ensured answer, they all became a part of Pakistan. The Muslims of Bengal had underscored the Muslim identity during the later years of the British Raj. Once Pakistan was created they chose to emphasize their Bengali identity. Within five years of the founding of Bangladesh, there was another shift from Bengali to Bangladeshi; the people continue to remain critically divided on the Bengali-Bangladeshi issue.

Next we analyzed the reasons for the high incidents of military intervention in the political arena of Bangladesh. To strengthen the “Bangladeshi Nationalism” the makers of it not only made the Bangladeshi Culture but also extensively Islamized the Military Force of the country. The military regimes which, usurped power through coups in 1975 and 1982 and ruled the country until 1990, had pursued politics of Islamisation as a means to gain political legitimacy. We examined how the professional rule of the armies conceptualized in theory. Then we look at the possibilities of its negation. Finally we looked at civil-military relations with regard to Bangladesh. In such a scenario we notice that the army became both praetorian and corporate. This, we now note in similar to the characterization of the rule of the army in Pakistan (please see Veenā Kukreja’s book on *Contemporary Pakistan: Political Processes, Conflicts and Crises*; Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2003). The Bangladesh army, like the Pakistan army, during the period of the coup used Islam to increase its legitimacy. But, this was no match to the pervading corruption during the successive military regimes of Ziaur Rehman and Hussain Muhammad Ershad. This provided the previously banned religion-based parties with the opportunity to resurface in the political arena.

Subsequently chapter five looks in detail at how the political parties after independence wooed the Islamic fundamentalists for vote bank purposes. The successive Governments of Bangladesh have shown increasing respect for Islam by taking a series of measures over the last years. The crises of hegemony of the ruling bloc and the politics of expediency by the “secularist” parties created an environment conducive to the rise of

religious rhetoric in political discourse and subsequently allowed the Islamist parties to become a significant force in the Bangladesh polity.

Finally we have tried to delineate the role of the BNP and AL in promoting the fundamentalism in the society through their use of alliances with the parties like Jamaat and Islami Oikya Front in order to further their electoral fortunes by giving them footholds in the political platform. Two major political parties (BNP and AL) pursued a policy of expediency and lined up for the support of the Islamists at every turn. Over the past ten years, as Bangladesh returned to civilian rule and electoral politics, Islamists have emerged as the kingmakers, both in electoral and in ideological terms. This is because neither of the two major parties has yet to establish its moral leadership through consent or to construct a hegemonic ideology. In electoral politics, the Islamists have succeeded in creating a small but loyal base and in capturing the attention of the larger population because the two major claimants to power lack a clear and convincing ideological perspective and largely rely on issue-based differentiation.

The fundamentalist parties do not show much electoral clout, as the case also with Islamist organizations like the Jamaat-e-Islami and other detachments following the Deoband School of Islam, in Pakistan. the latest elections have not given majority to anyone of the two Pakistani parties wearing a reformist mark. The Islamist parties have failed badly in elections.

In Bangladesh we notice that currently both the major parties, BNP and AI are in a limbo with the caretaker government, calling the shots on cases of corruption against their leaderships. This is again similar to the situation in Pakistan, where the present government has secured the life of their leaders from such corruption scandals and cases. Going by the events in Bangladesh, especially with regard to attempts of Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina to return to political arena of Bangladesh, corruption is bugging them as much as it has bugged the Bangladesh army and the Pakistani political parties and the army. By all counts, Bangladesh may be in for the current present situation of Pakistan if elections take place.

There are therefore, similarities and dissimilarities in terms of Islamisation. We have noted the similarities. The dissimilarities are noted historically in Islam's mass base in Bangladesh, in contrast to Pakistan. It has supported by the landed peasantry in Pakistan. But in Bangladesh Islam was followed by the deprived peasant classes also. Second, in Pakistan, different sects exist, like the Mohajirs, Suffis, Sunnis, Ahmediyyas and Shias. In religious terms some of these belong to Deobandi, Quadianis and other schools. In Bangladesh there are hardly any groups from the Deoband School. They are mainly Sunnis.

No matter what the sect is, currently Bangladesh is poised on the crossroads. It may remain as it is enmeshed in Islamisation for the next decade or so, no matter what the polity is or which political party gets power. When will the wheel on the worm of democracy turn to secularism is an open, debatable and in conclusive issue.

Bibliography:

Primary Sources

Draft Manifesto, Democratic League, 1976.

Eighth National Parliamentary Election, 2001. Eleven Parties Election Declaration and Undertakings. 23rd August, 2001.

Election Manifesto, 2001, Communist Party of Bangladesh. Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Election Manifesto, National Parliamentary Election, 2001. Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

Election Manifesto, National Parliamentary Election, 2001. Bangladesh Awami League.

Bangladesh Awami League Election Steering Committee, 2001, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Government of Bangladesh, 1972. The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Government of Bangladesh. 1972. Bangladesh Ganaparishader Bitarka (Debates in the Bangladesh Constituent Assembly). Vol. II. No.9. Dhaka.

Government of Pakistan, *Education Statistics of Pakistan*. Ministry of Education, Islamabad, 1970.

Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Finance, *Budget Estimates 1975-76*. Dhaka, 1975.

Manifesto, Bangladesh Islamic Democratic League, n.d.

Manifesto, Bangladesh Nationalist Party; August 1978.

The Constitution of the Bangladesh Awami League, as modified upto 26th December 2002. Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The Constitution of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, as modified upto 30th November, 1995.

Secondary Sources

Books:

A.G. Noorani, *Islam and Jihad: Prejudice versus Reality*. Zed Books, London and New York, 2002.

Ahamed, Emajuddin, *Military Rule and the Myth of Democracy*. The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1988.

Ahmad, Aziz , *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 1964.

Ahmed, Abul Mansur, ‘Amar Dekha Rajnitir Panchash Bochor’ (Fifty years of Politics, As I Saw It). Dhaka: The Adarsha Printing Press, 1970.

Ahmed, Emajuddin, *Bureaucratic Elites in Segmented Economic Growth, Bangladesh and Pakistan*. Dhaka University Press Limited, Bangladesh, 1980.

Alana, G., *Pakistan Movement: Historical Documents*. Khan Brothers and Company, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February, 2008.

Aouwal, Maolana Abdul, *Mukhosher Antaraley Jamaat* (Jamaat Behind the Mask). Parijat Prakashani, Dhaka, Bangladesh, June, 2004.

Aouwal, Maolana Abdul, *The Real Face of the Jamaat*. Agami Publishers, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February, 1993.

Azad, Abul Kalam, *India Wins Freedom*. Bombay, India, 1959.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (Bangladesh Women Council), “*Promotion and Protection of Women’s Human Rights in Bangladesh, Project Completion Report*. July 2002-December 2003.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (Bangladesh Women Council), *Endangered Humanity, a Field Observation Report on Repression on Minority Hindu Women*. October 2001 to 4-5 April 2002.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (Bangladesh Women Council). *Fundamentalism Is An Obstacle Towards Human Rights*. September, 2006.

Bhuiyan, Md. Abdul Wadud, *Emergence of Bangladesh and Role of Awami League*. Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, India, 1982.

Chakravarty, S.R , *Bangladesh: Under Mujib, Zia and Ershad (Dilemma of a New Nation)*. Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, India, 1995.

Chakravarty, S.R, Virendra Narain, *Bangladesh, Vol.2, Domestic Politics*, South Asia Studies Series 13 (Ed.). South Asian Publishers PVT LTD, New Delhi, India, 1986.

Chakravarty, S.R., Virendra Narain, *Bangladesh. Vol.1, History and Culture*, South Asia Studies series 12 (Ed.). South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, India, 1986.

Chatterjee, Bankimchandra, *Essentials of Dharma*, trans. M. Ghosh. Calcutta, 1977(1884-5).

Chatterjee, Partha, *The Nation And Its Fragments: Colonial And Postcolonial Histories*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 1994.

Chitkara, M.C., *Bangladesh, Mujib to Hasina*. APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, India, 1997.

Cohen, Stephen P., *The Indian Army: Its Contribution to the Development of a Nation*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

Decalo, S., *Coups and Army Rule in Africa*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1976.

Eaton, Richard M., *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier 1204-1760*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 2006

Edwards, Beverly Milton, *Islamic Fundamentalism Since 1945*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York, 2005.

Faaland, Just, *Aid and Influence, the Case of Bangladesh* (Ed.). New York, St. Martin Press, 1981.

Finer, S.E., *The Man on Horseback: The Role of Military in Politics*. Pall Mall Press, London, 1962.

Franda, Marcus, *Bangladesh; The First Decade*. South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 1982.

Gramsci, Antonio, *Selections from Prison Notebooks*. International General, New York, 1971.

Gupta, Sukharanjan Das, *Mid-Night Massacre in Dhaka*. New Delhi, India 1978.

Gutteridge, William, *Armed Forces in New States*. Oxford University Press, London, 1962.

Hardy, Peter, *The Muslims of British India*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1972.

Hasan, Maidul, *Muldhara '71* (Mainstream '71). University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, March, 2004.

Hasan, Mushirul, *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization* (Ed.). Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1940.

Heehs, Peter, *Nationalism, Terrorism, Communalism: Essays in Modern Indian History*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 1998.

Hossain, Golam, *General Ziaur Rahman and the BNP, Political Transformation of a Military Regime*. Dhaka University Press Limited, 1988.

Huntington, Samuel P., *Political Order in Changing Societies*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1966.

Ilias, Khandakar Mohammad, *Bangabandhu's Philosophy for Social Revolution in Bangladesh* (Ed.). Dhaka: Bangladesh Parishad, 1979.

Iqbal, Mohammad, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought In Islam*. Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, India, 1994.

Islam, Amirul, *Muktijudhher Smriti (Memories of the Liberation War)*. Kagoj Prakashana, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1991.

Islam, Major Rafiqul, *Ekti Phoolke Bachabo Boley (To Save a Flower)*. Dhaka University Press Ltd., Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1983.

Islam, Rafiqul (Retired Major, PSC), *Swairashasaner Nay Bachar: 1982-90(Nine Years of Despotism/Tyranny: 1982-90)*. University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, August, 1991.

Islam, Rafiqul (Retired Major, PSC). *Bangladesh: Military Rule and the Crisis of Democracy*. University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1992.

Jahan, Rounaq, *Bangladesh Politics: Problems and Issues*. University Press limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1980.

Jahan, Rounaq, *Bangladesh Promise and Performance*. (Ed). Zed Books LTD. London and New York and The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Jalal, Ayesha, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985.

Jamil-ud-din Ahmad , *Jinnah, Muhammad Ali: Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah (Ed.)*, Vol.1.Lahore, Pakistan, 1968

- Janowitz, Morris, *The Military in the Political Development of New Nations*. Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1964.
- Johnson, Dale L., *Middle Classes in Dependent Countries*. Sage Publications, London, 1985.
- Johnson, John. A., *The Role of Military in Underdeveloped Countries* (Ed.). Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1962.
- Kabir, Shahriar, *Human Rights and Fundamentalism in Bangladesh*. Charulipi Publication, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2003.
- Kabir, Shahriar, *Trial of War Criminals & Evil Politics of Jamat*. Ananya, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February, 2008.
- Kabir, Shahriar. *Fundamentalism in Bangladesh*. Al-Amin Printers, February, 1998.
- Kabir, Shariar, *Fundamentalism in Bangladesh and Communalism*. Ananya Publications, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1998.
- Karim, Abdul, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal*. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1959.
- Karlekar, Hiranmay, *Bangladesh: The Next Afghanistan?* Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, India, 2005.
- Khan, Aatur Rahman .*Ten Years of Despotism*. Naoroj Kitabistan, Dhaka, Bangladesh, November, 1970.
- Khan, Zillur Rahman, *Leadership Crisis in Bangladesh*. Dhaka University Press Ltd., 1984.
- Kukreja, Veena, *Civil-Military Relations in South Asia: Pakistan, Bangladesh and India* Sage Publications, New Delhi, India, 1991.
- Lelyveld, David, *Aligarh's First Generation: Solidarity in British India*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978.

- Levtzion, N., *Conversion to Islam*. New York, 1979.
- Lieuwen ,Edwin, *Generals vs. Presidents: Neo-Militarism in Latin America*. Praeger, New York, 1964.
- Lifschultz, Lawrence, *Bangladesh: The Unfinished Revolution*. Zed Press, London, July 1979.
- Lohia, Rammanohar, *Guiltymen of India's Partition*. Rammanohar Lohia Samata Vidyalaya Nyas Publication Dept. Hyderabad, India. 1970.
- Majumdar, Dr. Rameshchandra, *History of Ancient Bengal*. Calcutta, India, 1971.
- Mamoon, Muntasir & Jayanta Kumar Roy, *Civil Society in Bangladesh, Resilience and Retreat*. Firma KLM Pvt, Under the Auspices of the University of Calcutta, India, 1996.
- Mamoon, Muntasir, *Bengal Partition in 1905 and the Reaction in East Bengal*. Mowla Brothers, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February, 1999.
- Maniruzzaman, Talukder, *The Bangladesh Revolution and its Aftermath*. Dhaka, Bangladesh Books International, 1980
- Marty, Martin E. and R. Scott Appleby, *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* (Ed.); The University of Chicago Press LTD, Chicago and London, 1995.
- McCully. B.T., *English Education and Origins of Indian Nationalism*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1940.
- Metcalf, Barbara D., *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 2004.
- Metcalf, Barbara Daly, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India. 2005.
- Migdal. Joe S., *Strong Societies and Weak States, State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third world*. Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1988.

Mirza, Sarfaraz Hussain, *Not The Whole Truth (East Pakistan Crisis, March-December 1971)*. Centre For South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab. Lahore, Pakistan, December, 1989.

Misra B.B, *Indian Middle Classes*. London, 1961.

Mosley, Leonard, *The Last Days of the British Raj*. Jaico Publishing House, Bombay. n.d.

Murshid, Tazeen, *The Sacred and the Secular*. Oxford University Press, Calcutta, India, 1995.

Nordlinger, E.A., *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Government*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J; Prentice-Hall, 1977.

O' Donnell, Charles Peter, *Bangladesh: Biography of a Muslim Nation*. West View Press: Boulder and London, 1984.

O'Donnell, G., *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism*. University of California, Berkeley, 1973.

Pal, Bipinchandra, *The Soul of India: A Constructive Study of Indian Thoughts and Ideals*. Calcutta, India, 1958.

Philip, C.H., *The Evolution of India and Pakistan*. Oxford University Press, London, 1962.

Punjabi, Riyaz, *USA and the Muslim world-Cooperation and Confrontation*(Ed.). Brunel Academic Publishers Ltd., 2004.

Pye, Lucian W., *Aspects of Political Development*. Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1966.

Rafiuddin Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906: A Quest for Identity*. Oxford University Press, London and New York, 1981.

Rahman, Fazlur, *Islam*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Second Edition, 1979.

Rehman, Matiur and Sayed Azizul Haque. *Hindu Community of Bangladesh Under the Prey of Extortion*. Gyan Publication. February, 1990.

Rashid, Harun-or, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh, Bengal Muslim League and Muslim Politics 1936-1947*. Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1987.

Riaz, Ali, *God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh*. Rowman and Little Field Publishers, Lanham, 2004.

Riaz, Ali, *State, Class and Military Rule: Political Economy of Martial Law in Bangladesh*. Nadi New Press, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1994.

Rizvi, Hasan Askari, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan 1947-86*. Progressive Publishers, Lahore, Pakistan, 1987.

Roy, M.N., *Selected Works of M.N. Roy*. Vol.1, Delhi, 1987.

Rubbee, K. Fuzli, *The Origin of the Musalmans of Bengal*, 1985.

Sarker, Jatin, *Pakistaner Janmo Mrittu Darshon* (The Philosophy of Birth-Death of Pakistan). Jatiya Sahitya Prakash, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February, 2007.

Sen, Asit Kumar, *India in Turk and Afghan Era*. K.P. Bagchi and Company, Calcutta, India, 1998.

Sen, Rangalal, *Political Elites in Bangladesh*. University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1986.

Shakir, Moin, *Khilafat to Partition: A Survey of Major Political Trends Among Indian Muslims During 1919-1947*. Kalamkar Prakashan, New Delhi, India, June, 1970.

Shri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings-1*. Pondicherry, India, 1972.

Siddiq, Agha Ayesha, *Pakistan's Arms Procurement and Military Build up, 1979-99: In Search of a Policy*. Hound mills, Palgrave, New York, 2001.

Siddiq, Ayesha, *Military Inc: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*. Pluto Press, London, 2007.

Sinha, Kankar, *Communalism and Minority Crisis*. Jatiya Sahitya Prakash, Dhaka, Bangladesh. February, 2007.

Sinha, Kankar. *State Fundamentalism and Minority Communities*. Salmani Publication, January 1999.

Smith, Donald E., *India as a Secular State*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Smith, W.C., *The Muslim League, 1942-45*. Lahore, Pakistan, 1945.

Sobhan, Rehman, *Bangladesh: Problems of Governance*. Konark Publishers PVT LTD. New Delhi, India, 1993

Thapar, Romila; Harbans Mukhia; Bipin Chandra, *Communalism and the Writing of Indian History*. K.P. Bagchi and Company, Calcutta.1989.

The New Encyclopedia, Britannica. Vol. 5. Founded 1758, 15th Edition, 1993.

The Report of the Hamoodur Rehman Commission (Of Inquiry into the 1971 War) As Declassified by the Government of Pakistan. Vanguard Books (Pvt) Ltd, Lahore, Pakistan. n.d.

Thomas, Clive, *The Rise of Authoritarian State in Peripheral Societies*. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1984.

Thompson, William R., *The Grievances of Military Coup-Makers*. Sage Professional Papers in Comparative Politics; Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, 1973

Uddin, Sufia M., *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity and Language In an Islamic Nation*. Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, India, 2006.

Umar, Badruddin, *Cultural Fundamentalism*. Muktaadhara, Dhaka, Bangladesh. October, 1980.

Umar, Badruddin, *East Bengal's Language Movement and Contemporary Politics*. Vol.1.

Mawla Brothers, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1970.

Umar, Badruddin, *East Bengal's Language Movement and Contemporary Politics*. Vol.2.

Mawla Brothers, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1975

Umar, Badruddin, *Fundamentalism*. Muktaadhara. Dhaka, Bangladesh. June, 1980.

Umar, Badruddin, *The Emergence of Bangladesh. Vol. 2, Rise Of Bengali Nationalism (1958-1971)*. Oxford University Press, New York, 2006.

Wilson, A. Jeyaratnam and Dennis Dalton, *The States of South Asia: Problems of National Integration*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1982.

Ziring, Lawrence, *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan 1958-1969*. Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, 1971.

Ziring, Lawrence. *Bangladesh-Mujib to Ershad*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 1992.

Articles:

Ahsan, Abul, "Foreign Policy in a Changing World; Bangladesh's Foreign Policy: In Search of Security and A New Role". *World Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January-March, 1999.

Ahsan, Syed Badrul, "Bangladesh Since 1971: How Far Has It Come?". *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 2, July 2005.

Baidya, Samaresh, "Bangladesh: The Revolution Betrayed", *World Focus*, 314, February 2006.

Baxter, Craig, "Bangladesh: Can Democracy Survive?". *Current History*, Vol. 95, No. 600, April, 1996.

Begum, Anwara, "Asian Women Leaders: a Comparative Study of the images of Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh". *Asian Profile*, Volume. 34, No. 3, June 2006.

Bhardwaj , K.K. "Bangladesh Moving Towards Disaster". *South Asia Politics*, January 2004, Volume2, Issue 9.

Bose, Sharmila. "Anatomy of Violence, Analysis of Civil War in East Pakistan in 1971". *EPW*, Vol.40, Issue No.41, 8-14th October, 2005.

Chowdhury, Afsan, "Bangladesh: Votes & Violence". *Himal*, Vol. 14, No. 11, November, 2001.

Datta, Sreeradha, "Bangladesh Elections: a Preliminary Assessment." *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.25, No-8, November, 2001.

Datta, Sreeradha, "Bangladesh's Political Evolution: Growing Uncertainties." *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.27, No.2, April-June 2003

Dhar, M.K., "Bangladesh: A Need to Rediscover the Secular Forces". *World Focus*, 314, February 2006.

Franda, Marcus, "Murder In Dhaka: Ziaur Rahman's Second Round". *EPW*, Vol. 13, No. 12, 25th March, 1978.

Gajendragadkar, P.B., "The Concept of Secularism in Secular Democracy." *New Delhi, weekly*. Annual Number, 1970.

Ghosh, Shyamali, "Fazlul Haq and Muslim Politics in Pre-Partition Bengal". *International Studies*, Vol. 13, July-September, 1974.

Ghosh, Suniti Kumar, "Why Bengal Got Partitioned and For Whose Benefits". *Culture*, Vol. 8, No. 5, January, 1999, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Habibullah, M, "Social Origin of Business Executives in Bangladesh". *The Dhaka University Studies*. Part A. Vol. 24, 1976.

Hagerty, Devin T., "Bangladesh in 2006: Living in 'Interesting Times.'" *Asian Survey*, Vol.47, No-1, Jan-Feb 2007.

Himalayan and Central Asian Studies, Vol. 7, No. 3-4, July-December, 2003.

Hogg, Charu Lata , "Unconvincing Crackdown". *The world Today*, Volume.62, No.7, July 2006.

Hopkins, K, "Civil-Military Relations in Developing Countries". *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1973.

Hossain, Golam, "Bangladesh In 1995: Politics of Intransigence". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 36, No. 2, February, 1996.

Hughes, Kirsty, "Bangladesh: Moving Towards or Away From Democracy?" *EPW*, Vol. 42, No-15, 14-20 April, 2007.

Islam, Syed Serajul, "The Rise of the Civil-Military Bureaucracy in the State Apparatus of Bangladesh". *Asian Thought & Society*, Vol. 11, No. 31, March, 1986.

Jahan, Rounaq, "Bangladesh in 2002: Imperiled Democracy". *Asian Survey*. Vol43. No.1, January-February, 2003

Jahan, Rounaq, "Bangladesh in 2003: Vibrant Democracy or Destructive Politics?", *Asian Survey*, Vol.44, No-1, Jan-Feb, 2004

Jalal, Ayesha, "Constructing a State: The Interplay of Domestic, Regional and International Factors in Post-Colonial Pakistan". *Colloquium Paper, Asia Program*, Widrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, Washington D. C., April 16, 1986.

Khan, DR. Shahnaz and Md. Assaduzzaman, "The Nexux of Political & Administrative Development: The Case of Bangladesh". *Regional Studies*, Vol.15, No.2, Spring 1997.

Khan, Zillur R., "Politicization of the Bangladesh Military: A Response to Perceived Shortcomings of Civilian Government". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 21, No. 5, May, 1981.

Kochanek, Satnley A., "Bangladesh In 1997: The Honeymoon Is Over". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 38, No. 2, February, 1998.

Kochanek, Stanley A., "Bangladesh in 1996: The 25th Year of Independence", *Asian Survey*. Vol.37. No.2. February, 1997

Milam, William B., "Bangladesh and the Burdens of History". *Current History*, Vol. 106, No. 699, April, 2007.

Mookherjee, Nayanika, "Bangladesh war of 1971-a prescription for reconciliation". *EPW*, Vol-41, No.36, 9-15th September 2006.

Mukherjee, Sanhita, "March to Separate Identity and Regression". *Mainstream*, Vol.41, No. 49, 22 November, 2003.

Mustafa, I, "Rise of Business Groups in Bangladesh". *BIDS (mimeo)*, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1989.

Naik, Rineeta, "Bangladesh: The Caretaker's Burden". *EPW*, Vol.42, No. 35, 1-7th September, 2007.

Nordlinger, Eric A., "Soldiers in Mufti: The Impact of Military Rule Upon Economic and Social Change in the Non-Western States", *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 64 .Dec. 1970.

Rahman, Matiur. "Corruption of Parties and Politics of Corruption". *Mainstream*, Vol.85, July-December 1997 (Annual).

Rashiduzzaman, M, "Bangladesh in 2000: Searching for Better Governance?". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 41, No. 1, January-February, 2001.

Rashiduzzaman, M., "Bangladesh in 2001: The Election and a New Political Reality?". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 42, No. 1, January-February, 2002.

Rashiduzzaman, M., "The National Awami Party of Pakistan: Leftist Politics in Crisis". *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. XLIII, No. 3, Fall, 1970.

Riaz, Ali, "Bangladesh in 2005: Standing at a Crossroads." *Asian Survey*, Vol. 46, No.1, Jan-Feb-2006

Riaz, Ali, "Bangladesh in 2004: The Politics of Vengeance and the Erosion of Democracy." *Asian Survey*, Vol.45. No.1, Jan-Feb, 2005

Riaz, Ali, "Minorities in Bangladesh: The Enemy Within? An Enquiry Into the Causes of Violence Against Religious Minorities in 2001." *Asian Profile*, Vol.33, No.3, June, 2005

Roy, Anjan, "Minorities Under Threat in Bangladesh", *World focus*, 314, February 2006.

Saeed, Amera, "Awami League (Hasina) Rise to Power". *Regional Studies*. Volume.15, No.1, Winter 1996-97.

Sahu, Anjan, "Geo-Strategic Interest of the US in Bangladesh in Post-9/11 Era". *South Asia Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 2, June 2006.

Sen, Binayek, "Bangladesher Brihat Bourgeoisie Srenir Bikash: Akti Druto Parjebekhyan" (Growth of Big Bourgeoisie in Bangladesh: An Observation). *Muktir Diganta*, No. 4, 1988.

Sengupta, Nabarun, "Scenery", *Desh*, Vol. 39, No.48, September 2, 1972.

Sharma, Mukul, "Bangladesh's Repressive Regime". *EPW*, Vol. 42, No. 32, 11-17th August, 2007.

Shehabuddin, Elora, "Bangladesh In 1998: Democracy on the Ground". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 39, No. 1, January-February, 1999.

Shehabuddin, Elora, "Bangladesh in 1999: Desperately Seeking a Responsible Opposition". *Asian Survey*, Vol.XL, No.1, January/February 2000.

Stalemate In Bangladesh, *World Focus*, 328, April, 2007.

Umar, Badruddin, "Bangladesh: Intellectuals, Culture and Ruling Class". *EPW*, Vol. 34, No. 20, 15-21 May, 1999.

Ziring, Lawrence, "Contemporary Islam and the Burden of History". *Review of Politics*, Vol. 64, No. 4, Fall 2002.

Newspapers and NGO Publications:

"10 Militant Organizations Have 48 Training Camps throughout the Country", *Daily Prothom Alo*, Dhaka, March 14, 2003.

"14th Amendment: Does it Add Value to the Constitution?" *The Daily Star*, Editorial, Dhaka, May 18, 2004

"2 More Killed in RAB Crossfire", *New Age*. Dhaka, December 1, 2004

"About 30,000 Minority People Take Shelter in India From Five Districts" , *The Bangladesh Observer* , Dhaka, December 5, 2001

"An Identifying Token of the Bad Luck of the Past". *Daily Sangbad*, Sub-Editorial Section, Dhaka; 6th August, 1984.

“Mufti Hannan Captured: Militant Kingpin Tells of Altaf’s Assurance of ‘no fear’.”, *The Daily Star* , Dhaka, October 2, 2005.

“Vested (Enemy) Property Act”.*The Daily New Nation* , Editorial. Dhaka, September 6, 2000

Ahmed, Nur-e-Alam, “Almost All of Those Who Were Raped Within 92 Days Since Election Are Minorities”, *Daily Janakantha*, Dhaka. February 17, 2002

Daily Bangla, Dhaka, Bangladesh, April 23rd, 1977

Daily Bangla, Dhaka, Bangladesh. August 16th, 1975

Daily Bhorer Kagoj, Dhaka, 10 May 2003

Daily Bichitra, Dhaka, March 26th, 1982

Daily Ittefaq, Dhaka, Bangladesh. February, 28, 1974

Daily Ittefaq, Dhaka, 15th January, 1983

Daily Janakantha, Dhaka, 10 May, 2003.

Daily Janakantha, Dhaka, 19th August, 2003.

Daily Prothom Alo, Dhaka 30th May, 2008

Daily Prothom Alo, Dhaka, 11 May, 2003

Daily Prothom Alo, Dhaka, 9 May, 2003

Daily Sangbad, Dhaka, Bangladesh. March 25th, 1981

Daily Sangbad, Dhaka; 28th August, 1983

Kabir, Nurul, ‘Time for Some Soul Searching’, *The New Age*, Dhaka, July 11, 2007

New York Times, 14th November 1981.

Seerat Conference, the Speech of Chief Martial Law Administrator, *Daily Sunday (Rabibar)*. Dhaka, January; 2nd, 1983; 27th December, 1982

South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre (SAHRDC), '*The Hindu Minority in Bangladesh: Legally Identified Enemy*'. Human Rights Feature, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 11th January 2000.

The Bhorer Kagoj, Dhaka, April 4, 1993

The Daily Star, Dhaka, 26th May 2000

Weekly Ekata, Dhaka; 4th February, 1983

Weekly Sunday (Rabibar), Dhaka, Bangladesh, 25th March, 1979

Internet Sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darul_Uloom_Deoband

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deobandi>

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-deobandi.htm>

http://www.bdec.org/stat/Parliament%20Election%202001%20Results%20and%20Statistics/share_of_votes_by_party.pdf