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Reorientation of Muslim Politics in Bengal (1937-1947): Myth and Reality

Abstract

Soon after the advent of the British in the sub-continent particularly in Bengal during 1757, the political paradigm shifted from one to another and finally got stabled in the form of Muslim nationalism culminating into the creation of Pakistan in 1947. However, during the course of about two hundred years different identities raised their heads to be ultimately perished with the constraints of time and space. That phenomenon deserves keen analysis to understand the history of the creation of Pakistan with especial reference to the political upper and under currents in the Muslim society there. This article is an effort to understand the situation in the light of available original and secondary source materials pertaining to Bengal particularly and that of the creation of Pakistan generally.

Muslim politics in Bengal, particularly 1937 to 1947 is very crucial with particular reference to the creation of Pakistan. A lot of historians have analyzed this particular phase of history with numerous views and perspectives. Consequently, confusion still persists about the history of this particular era in Pakistan Movement especially after 1940, when the then elected Chief Minister of Bengal, Sher-e-Bangal A.K. Fazlul Huq¹ moved a resolution in the annual session of the All-India Muslim League, held at the Minto Park, Lahore in March 1940. The resolution was not termed as the Pakistan Resolution at the time when it was moved, rather it was known as the historic Lahore Resolution. Later on with the changed political developments the aforementioned resolution was termed and known as the Pakistan Resolution.

Under the circumstances when Pakistan Resolution was getting popular support all over the subcontinent, especially in Bengal, various historians have come out with mainly two views – firstly, the political developments of Bengal moved towards the creation of a language-based country namely Bangladesh, secondly, the other factions of the historians have seen the political developments leading towards the creation of Pakistan being on the Muslim identity. Most of the

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recent historians from India and Bangladesh have seen the Pakistan Movement in Bengal as inherently a movement for Bangladesh. At the same time a few others have seen the movement as a movement based on Muslim identity that led to the creation of Pakistan. In such a situation a dire need persists as to understand fact, what actually happened in the political arena of this significant part of the India where the Pakistan Movement got widespread public support in Bengal during 1940 and 1947.²

Hence, there exists a need to assess the political developments with particular reference to the point that whether the Muslim politics in Bengal was moving towards the Bengali identity or to the Muslim identity in the period between 1757 and 1947 generally and the era between 1937 and 1947 especially. That is why the present research has been undertaken to come out with a conclusion on the basis of historical evidences with particular reference to the primary sources.³

In doing so all the available primary and secondary sources have been taken into consideration to draw a picture based on the political currents in Bengal from the middle age to the modern age. That was why the 7th Century's history of Bengal was also taken into consideration to know the fact that whether the clash of identities of the local people was expanding or diminishing. As the Pakistan Movement was based on the Muslim identity of the people of the subcontinent, hence, an efforts has been made to understand the factor that, when and how the Muslim identity was growing in Bengal and how far it developed. That is why, a little bit more focus has been given to the politics of the people of Bengal especially after the advent of the British in Bengal as a result of the defeat of Nawab Sirajul Daula in 1757 at the Battle of Plassey. Nevertheless, the occupation by the East-India Company triggered new seats of power politics and domination over the people of the locality. As a result of the new policies of exploitation and strategies of the British East-India Company during 1757 to 1857 especially, and later on during direct British control between 1857 and 1947.⁴

The changed policies based on exploitation gave birth to new forces of power more emphatically new power groups ignoring rather excluding all those who remained influential at the time of the East-India Company's invasion on Bengal. As the East-India Company snatched power from the Muslims, more specifically Nawab Sirajul Daula, the remnant of the Mughal empire, hence, as a strategy the East India Company replaced the Muslim political elite particularly the landlords with the Hindu landlords, as the Muslims did not remain trustworthy for the East-India Company due resistance against the British onslaught / occupation on Bengal. Consequently, the British forces/powers continued a policy of suppressing the Muslims and making the Hindus powerful to attain latter's support for the dominating powers.⁵

Such repressions continued for more than hundred years (1757-1857) in the Muslim society of Bengal when other parts of India remained out of British Control. Hence the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal proceeded towards their religious identity in the prevailing situation. During the East India Company's occupation in Bengal, both the Hindus and Muslims were Bengali speaking but language-based identity could not be developed due to political and financial exploitation of the Muslims of Bengal. Secondly, the Hindus strengthened their

religious identity as the followers of Hinduism and the Muslims strengthened their Muslim identity as the followers of Islam, because in the prevailing exploitation by the British-East India Company, the Hindus were a supporting factor for the occupation forces. Thus a policy of 'divide and rule' was initiated in the early phase of British Rule in India which was witnessed by the Muslims of Bengal who became a critical victim of the new policy of the British colonial power. Thus both Hindus and Muslims identities were enrooted in the soil of Bengal which ultimately resulted into the division of Bengal more importantly the division of India by way of the creation of Pakistan and India in 1947.⁶

One very significant aspect of the politics of the subcontinent with particular reference to the politics of Bengal is that, the Muslims of Bengal remained under the dual hegemony over them by the British and Hindus for a period of 190 years, whereas, other parts of the subcontinent remained under the British occupation for a maximum period of hundred years or much less in cases of the parts of the subcontinent which come under the British occupation much later. Thus the other parts of the subcontinent did not practically experience the exploitative policies of the British for a long period of history expanding over about two hundred years. At the same time the other parts of the subcontinent failed to gain the practical knowledge as to how the Hindu community with their support to the colonial power, were adored and benefited during the British exploitative policies which remained suppressive for the Muslim community over a period of two hundred years.⁷

That was why the geneous of the political phenomenon of Bengal with special reference to the Hindu and Muslim politics over there was much different from that of other parts of the subcontinent. This was the reason that the Pakistan Movement got special support of the Bengali Muslims as compared to that of other Muslim majority provinces of British India. Ironically, this reality of perception of history remained dormant when the historians have tried to analyze or explain the history of the subcontinent, especially after the advent of the British in the South Asian Subcontinent.⁸

From the aforementioned facts it can be deduced from the historical perspective that the experience of the Bengali Muslims during the prolonged British-cum-Hindu exploitative dominance helped them a lot to understand the geneous, value and significance of the Pakistan Movement much earlier than the Muslims of other Muslim majority provinces of the British India could understand that reality. Undoubtedly prime concern of the Indian people was to get rid of the colonial domination and thereby attain independence of India to introduce self rule on the soil. Nonetheless, that was the target and slogan of the Indian National Congress to implement home rule after the withdrawal of the British authority.⁹

Hence, the Congress wanted to be the sole representative of all the people of the subcontinent including the Muslims. A lot of Muslim population was also seconding that view. In such a situation the All-India Muslim League came out with a very unique proposal for the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent after the British departure from the India. In that sense the Muslim League's idea of the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims i.e., Pakistan was in fact a proposal for dual independence. Firstly,

freedom from the British colonial power and secondly, from the probable Hindu majority communities domination over India in case of the existence of an undivided India after the withdrawal of the British authority from the land.¹⁰

This is why it took a long span of time to understand the necessity of the notion of double independence by the Muslims particularly of those provinces which were being counted as Muslim majority provinces. In such a situation Bengal was a surprising exception as the idea of dual or double independence could easily be digested when other parts of the subcontinent remained in prolonged confusion. The primary reason of this enlightenment of the Bengali Muslims was due to their practical experience of the domination and exploitation of both the powers from whom Muslims were to be independent under the Lahore/Pakistan Resolution of 1940. This was why the Pakistan Resolution got immediate support from the Bengali Muslims especially the people of big cities like Kolkata and Dhaka.¹¹

The idea was well received not only by the Bengali Muslim politicians but also the literary segment of the Muslim society immediately after the Pakistan Resolution launched political campaign on the one hand and literary campaign on the other.¹² On the political domain the election results of 1945 and 1946¹³ were self-explanatory. Nonetheless, it was the time when All-India Muslim League was supposed to prove that – firstly, the League was the representative body of the Muslims and secondly, the idea of creation of Pakistan was not merely the demand of the Muslim League but it was a genuine and wholehearted demand of the Muslims of the subcontinent.¹⁴

In proving the aforementioned claim the Muslims of Bengal came forward with crude practical evidences by way of election results and logical political stances. In fact, the Pakistan Resolution which was moved by the then elected Prime Minister of Bengal, was once again clarified with a definite goal of the creation of a single state Pakistan through a proposal moved by the Chief Minister of the same province in 1946 in the All-India Muslim Legislators Convention in Delhi.

Another very significant and typical example of Muslim politics in Bengal¹⁵ was the fact that Indian National Congress which was claiming to be the sole representative of all the citizens of India, was uprooted from the province of Bengal long before the Pakistan Resolution was adopted in 1940. Consequently, in the elections of 1945 and 1946 no candidate of the Indian National Congress could win any single seat neither in the Central Legislative Assembly nor in the Bengal Provincial Assembly.¹⁶

This exclusive expulsion of the Indian National Congress from the Muslim society of Bengal was not merely a negation of the claim of the Congress but also proved the fact that the Muslims of Bengal were clearly aware of the fact that after the withdrawal of the British forces, the majority rule over India i.e., the rule of Indian National Congress could not be acceptable for the Muslims of the subcontinent generally and the Muslims of Bengal particularly. Needless to say that this sort of enlightenment was the essence of the claim and demand of the All-India Muslim League particularly after the adoption of the Pakistan Resolution.¹⁷

Even before the adoption of the Pakistan Resolution in the political arena, the Muslims of Bengal gave significant proof of the fact that they were not convinced by the slogan of the Indian National Congress regarding their idea/target of single independence i.e., from the British Colonial Power. That was why in the elections of 1937, 1945 and 1946 the Congress could not win even nominal Muslim votes from Bengal.¹⁸

Hindu-Muslim unity efforts in Bengal have prolonged history which dates back even to the Mughal rule in India. Despite continuous efforts on behalf of the leaders of the both sides, Hindu-Muslim unity remained a utopia till the creation of Pakistan. In the modern phase of political development the Ghuznavi-Burduwan Pact of 1937 seemed to be citable especially. Despite hectic efforts the dream of Hindu-Muslim political unity always remained a myth. Under the circumstances it remained a very significant question for the historians who dealt this particular chapter of history of Bengal. Nonetheless those questions are required to be analyzed in the light of primary sources available regarding the history of Bengal. The major efforts have been made in the current research to analyze those factors which destined the Hindu-Muslim unity efforts futile.¹⁹

It seemed that some very typical realities are assimilated in the society of Bengal which sustained as a gulf between the political unity efforts of the two most significant majority segments of the population of Bengal. That was why after the creation of Bangladesh basing on the political slogan of Bengali language-based identity in 1971, East Bengal and West Bengal remained separate political entities – one in the form of an independent state of Bangladesh [East-Bengal] and another in the form of a province [West Bengal] under India. Had there been a base of common political identity of both the parts of Bengal i.e., East and West Bengal, both the parts of Bengal would have come under a single political umbrella namely Bangladesh, because people of both the parts of Bengal claimed themselves as Bengalis. Surprisingly, in the political domain both the parts remained aloof from each other – one with their Muslim identity and another with their Hindu identity. Thus, religion still keeping both the parts separated from each other due to their religio-cultural differences.²⁰

Under the circumstances the history of Bengal still persisting with numerous questions especially pertaining to the identity-based reality of the two prime sections of the population of Bengal. Nevertheless, these core issues of the two major societies of Bengal ultimately resulted into the creation of Pakistan (East Pakistan) in 1947 and Bangladesh, in 1971.²¹ Hence, this study is much significant with its inherent realities of the two societies of Bengal. Besides, the partition of Bengal²² in 1905 was vehemently opposed by the Hindu society of Bengal particularly and the same society of India generally. When the British authority divided Bengal into two parts i.e., East Bengal and Assam and West Bengal for merely administrative reasons as it was too difficult for the authority to administer such a vast area which was densely populated. That was why the British government after prolonged assessment and brain storming came forward with an idea to divide the province into two parts.²³

Immediately after the partition the Hindu society launched a furious and bloody struggle to undo the division of Bengal calling it “vivisection of Mother

Bengal”. Consequently, as a result of the destructive protests, the British authority ultimately bowed down to the pressure of the Hindu community. Resultantly the partition of Bengal was annulled in 1911. Needless to say that the prime reason of the annulment-oriented campaigns of the Hindus was based on their enmity with the Muslims. The Hindus knew that as a result of the partition Muslims of East-Bengal got a golden chance to decide their political fate devoid of pressure from the influential Hindu community who assumed highhandedness under the British patronage.²⁴

The double standard of the Hindu society of Bengal became clear when they pleaded the division of Bengal in 1947 when the Muslim League was demanding whole of Bengal as a part of East Pakistan. Thus the Hindu community of Bengal negated their earlier stances regarding the so-called ‘vivisection of mother Bengal’ and became instrumental in the partition of Bengal when it was supposed to be a part of Pakistan.²⁵ Those realities have resulted into many questions regarding the geneous and core points which are persisting in their socio-political thoughts and actions.²⁶ The present research is an effort to try to understand the paradigms which are instrumental in the practical life and society of both the majority groups of the Bengali speaking population.

It is generally known that the Pakistan Movement got special recognition by the Muslim society of Bengal at a time when the All-India Muslim League had to prove before the Indian National Congress and the British authority especially and the world power generally, that the creation of a separate Muslim state in India was primarily the demand of the Muslims of subcontinent and not merely a slogan of the Muslim League. Thus Muslim Bengal remained the focal point of the All-India Muslim League politics in the subcontinent.²⁷ That was why time and again the President of the Muslim League M.A. Jinnah wanted a lead by the Muslims of Bengal in the political campaign of the All-India Muslim League. History proved that Bengal Muslim League attained surprising victories in both the elections of 1937 and 1945-46 which were held under the Government of India Act, 1935. Thus the Muslim League was able to form ministries in the province as a result of both the elections. Secondly the Chief Ministers of Bengal for the first time proposed the creation of a separate Muslim state in 1940 and in 1946 the Chief Minister of the same province removed all the doubts regarding the proportion of single Pakistan or many Pakistan.²⁸

As far as the ultimate target of Muslim League i.e., the creation of a separate Muslim state with the name of Pakistan was concerned, three main hurdles in the way were required to be removed by the Muslims of India and their representative body i.e., the All-India Muslim League – firstly, the withdrawal of the British forces and administration from the subcontinent; secondly, proving the representative stature of the Muslim League, winning the confidence of the Muslims of the British India and thirdly, undoing the claim of the Indian National Congress and its aligned political bodies, to the effect that they were the representative political bodies of the Muslim population of the British India.²⁹ Hence, it was not so easy task for the Muslim League at a time when the Muslims of the subcontinent were not united at all.

Apart from the aforementioned three major hurdles or obstacles, there were numerous other related and associated bottlenecks in the way of the All-India Muslim League to achieve its ultimate target of the creation of Pakistan. Among those associated problems one of the major issue was the due recognition to the Idea of Pakistan by the influential political parties and pressure groups in the subcontinent and also by the international powers. As a matter of fact the creation of Pakistan was not an idea that could easily be understood or accepted by the aforementioned quarters, because, in those days the known ideology for creation of a separate state was primarily based on the geographical divisions as well as language/culture-based identities of the concerned population.³⁰

So, the Muslim League had to convince the world as well, that Muslims of the subcontinent were not a minority of the Indian population, rather it was a full-fledged nation who deserved a separate and independent state of their own. In this domain Bengal with its intrinsic historical realities, came forward as the first and the most effective force to support the new ideology of the Muslim League.³¹ As it has already been discussed that the prolonged history of co-existence, interactions and experiments with the Hindus and the British authorities of Bengal's Muslim population, helped them a lot not only to understand the ideology behind the creation of Pakistan but also to contribute practically and effectively in its implementation process.³²

With regard to the struggle for the expulsion of the colonial power from the subcontinent, Bengal had made effective history right from the inception of the foreign occupation on the land. History proved that the Muslim Nawab of Bengal gave a very tough time to the intruding colonial forces, prior to their occupation of Bengal. However, the East-India Company was able to overpower the local Nawab not by dint of their armed forces only, but through connivance with the local betrayers – both Muslim and Hindu influential persons of Bengal. However, the conspiracy of the East-India Company would not have been a possibility or reality without the most effective support of the Hindu powerful business magnets and other influential personalities of Bengal. This fact has been clearly recognized by the British historians as well.³³

That was why from day one and even before that the Muslims of Bengal possessed hatred for both the communities i.e. the British occupation forces and their powerful Hindu supporters. Obviously, this reality bore fruits when time emerged to get rid of both the forces. Even Mir Qasim Ali, son of Mir Jaffar Ali (the collaborator with the British) launched vigorous resistance struggle against the foreign forces and their supportive powers in Bengal.³⁴ However, in collaboration with the local Hindu powerful men and business magnets, the Company managed to overcome the resistance but the armed struggle of the local Muslim population never ended though became weak at times. The most vigorous struggle was launched by Titu Mir who made a fort with bamboo to continue armed struggle against the East-India Company's forces. Similar several other struggles continued in Bengal till 1857, when the war of independence spread all over the subcontinent. Significantly enough, the prime sparking point of the war of independence was also Bengal, where the sepoys of the armed forces revolted against the British invaders.³⁵

After the war of independence when the armed struggle against the British rule transformed into some sort of intellectual cum political resistance, Bengal took a lead in that domain as well. Here the Muhammadan Literary Society of Kolkata launched by Syed Amir Ali during late nineteenth century and the creation of the All-India Muslim League in 1906 at Dhaka, can be mentioned as special cases. Numerous similar intellectual and political movements continued in Bengal till the ultimate withdrawal of the British forces from the subcontinent. Thus All-India Muslim League got exemplary support from the Muslims of Bengal in proving the fact that they were determined to get rid of the British occupation, simultaneously with the fear of probable Hindu domination over them.³⁶

As far as the acceptance of the representative stature of the All-India Muslim League, the Muslims of Bengal, in that domain as well, came forward with very significant support to the League in the elections of 1937 when the Muslim League became the most significant segment of the coalition ministry of Bengal which was formed in 1937 with A.K. Fazlul Huq as the Chief Minister.³⁷ Nonetheless, this victory of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League was unparallel in the whole of British India with reference to the Muslim League but Muslim seats were divided almost on fifty-fifty basis between the Krishak Proja Party and the Muslim League. Surprisingly enough in the elections of 1945 and 1946, it was practically proved that ninety seven percent of the Muslim voters of Bengal were supporting the All-India Muslim League and consequently, all other anti-Muslim segments of political domain of Bengal including the Krishak Proja Party were eliminated politically.³⁸ This victory of the All-India Muslim League in Bengal was a result of also a record performance in the election of 1946 which was unparallel in British India.³⁹

As far as the establishment of the fact that the Indian National Congress was not a real representative body of the Muslims of India was concerned, the Bengali Muslims through their efforts and policies gave practical examples. It was proved that in both the general elections of 1937 and 1945-46 the Indian National Congress could not win a single reserved Muslim seat in Bengal. Thus the Indian National Congress was politically uprooted from the Muslim society of Bengal unlike other parts of the subcontinent especially the Muslim majority provinces.⁴⁰

Similarly, in the process of removing the influence of the Muslim representatives of the Indian National Congress, Bengal took a remarkable lead. It may be mentioned here that due to the prolonged campaign by the Kolkata Muslim League, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a prominent Congress leader, could not continue his *imamat* in the Kolkata Maidan, where the biggest *Eid* congregations of the Muslims were being held. Resultantly, the Congress could find no significant leader among the Muslims to become effective in the Muslim society of Bengal to fulfil their political ideology and targets.⁴¹

As it is known that Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind was a very effective platform of the Indian National Congress to attract and organize Muslim support in favour of the Congress. On that front also Bengal took a lead in the process of undoing the influence of the Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind in the Muslim society mainly, by way of the formation of a separate Ulema party with the name Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam in

1945. It need to mentioned here that Allamah Raghīb Ahsan, the General Secretary of the Kolkata Muslim League with his vast intellectual capabilities and political effectiveness came forward with the idea of the formation of the Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam to counter the political activities of the Indian National Congress generally and the Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind especially. He with the continuous support of Suhrawardy made hectic efforts to form the party. Nevertheless, the newly formed Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam contributed very significantly in the popularizing process of the All-India Muslim League in the way of the creation of Pakistan as a separate homeland for the Muslims of the entire subcontinent.⁴²

Conclusion

During the British colonial era for tenure of about two hundred years right from 1757 till the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the political undercurrents as well as upper currents witnessed multi-centric paradigm shifts. Bengal was the first area which came under the British control as a result of East India Company's ascendancy over the Nawab of Bengal Sirajuddaula. Afterwards numerous direct actions in the form of arm struggles were launched to restore independence but all of them ultimately resulted into in vain. Then semi-electoral/electoral politics started. Undoubtedly, the forces of linguistic identities tried their best to gain upper hand in the political grouping and power struggles. On the other hand the forces inclined towards economic benefits and influence as their top priorities could achieve short lived successes. Finally, the struggle of the All-India Muslim League for the creation of Pakistan with the slogan of Muslim nationalism got ascendancy over all the parochial identities and manifestos. Thus the creation of Pakistan was not only possible in Bengal rather it became a model of politics for other Muslim majority areas of the South Asian Sub-continent.

Notes and References

¹ Sher-e-Bengal A.K. Fazlul Huq throughout his life remained a popular Muslim leader in Bengal. His contribution to the creation of Pakistan was enormous. For details see, *Khondokar Abdul Khaliq, Eik Shotabdi {One Hundred Years}* (Dhaka: Prokash Bhoban, 1966), 1-240 (The original book is in Bengali language).

² Bengal a Muslim majority province with a population of 154 million people, generally receives little notice in academic circles. S. Mahmud Ali, *Understanding Bengal* (London: Hurst and Company, 2010), pp. 4-5.

³ Bengal was one of the most important provinces of British India, which was always in the forefront of India's struggle for freedom. For instance, in 1862, the first Indian members sat in the newly constituted Bengal Council and from then electoral politics also played an important part in the struggle for freedom right up to 1947. Gautam Chattopadhyaya, *Bengal Electoral Politics and Freedom Struggle 1862-1947* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1984), p. 22.

⁴ Some of the important and authentic sources and rare materials are as follows: (i) J.C.Jack, *Bengal District Gazetteers*, (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1918), (ii) *Proceedings of Bengal Legislative Assembly, 1937-1947*, (iii) *Indian Annual Register and Quarterly Register, Calcutta*, (iv) *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, National Archives of Pakistan, (v) *All-India Muslim League Committee of Action (Proceedings) 1944-1945*, (vi) *Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1947-1986*, (vii) *Confidential Report on the Political Situation in Bengal (Fortnightly Provincial Reports)* etc.

⁵ Kathryn Jacques, *Bangladesh, India and Pakistan* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000), p. 131.

⁶ Harun-or-Rashid, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 1987), pp. 19-20.

⁷ The people of Bengal were politically more aware than the rest of the regions of British India. It was a Bengali poet who first spoke of the independence of India from Britain before everyone. The first President of Indian National Congress was a Bengali. The poet who composed the national anthems of India and Bangladesh was also a Bengali poet. The first organization that raised the slogan of liberating India from British Colonial Rule was established by Bengali thinkers. Hence, Bengali were the first people who were arrested, tortured, imprisoned and hanged by the British for treason. They created Free India Forces. Three noted Bengalis received the Nobel Prize. They were Rabindranath Tagore, Amartya Sen and Muhammad Younus. Faruque Ahmed, *Bengal Politics in Britain: Logic, Dynamics and Disharmony* (USA: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2013), p. i.

⁸ Sirlata Chatterjee, *Congress Politics in Bengal 1919-1939* (London: Anthem Press, 2002), p. 132.

⁹ *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, (Islamabad: National Archives of Pakistan), File No. 204.

¹⁰ J.C.Jack, *Bengal District Gazetteers*, (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1918), pp. 25-26.

¹¹ The idea of Pakistan movement was actually based on the concept of double independence/freedom – independence from the colonial masters on the one hand and freedom from the ensuing majority community domination as a result of expected withdrawal of the British powers from the subcontinent on the other. Syed Umar Hayat and Altaf Ullah, “Allamah Raghīb Ahsan and Pakistan Movement: An Assessment” in *International Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1, January-June 2017. p. 236.

¹² Syed Umar Hayat, “Muslim Political Ascendancy in Bengal: A Case Study of the Roles Played by the Bengal Provincial Muslim League and the Krishak Proja Party (1906-41)” in *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, July-December 2007, p. 211.

¹³ For details see, Muhammad Waliullah, *Amader Mukti-Sabgrān {Our Freedom Struggle}* (Dhaka: Nauroze Kitabistan, 1969), 368-369 (The original book is in Bengali language).

¹⁴ It is generally believed that any freedom struggle needs firm footing, basic idea, sincerity and philosophical foundation chalked out by its charismatic leadership and determination of the leadership as well as the general masses to transform the freedom struggle into independence. Syed Umar Hayat and Altaf Ullah, “Allamah Raghīb Ahsan and Pakistan Movement: An Assessment” in *International Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1, January-June 2017. p. 235.

¹⁵ Muslim politics in Bengal was not just a political movement rather it got the background of prolonged social and literary activities that rejuvenated the political will of the Bengali Muslims. For a detailed study see, Sardar Fazlul Karim, ed., *Pakistan Andolan O Muslim Sahitya {Pakistan Movement and Muslim Literature}* (Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1968), 1-45 (The original book is in Bengali language).

¹⁶ *Indian Annual Register* vol. 1, (Calcutta: Annual Register Office, 1940), p. 124.

¹⁷ Gautam Chattopadhyā, *Bengal Electoral Politics and Freedom Struggle 1862-1947* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1984), p. 29.

¹⁸ Meghna Guhathakurta and Willem Van Schendel, (ed). *The Bangladesh Reader: History, Culture and Politics* (London: Duke University Press, 2013), p. 168.

¹⁹ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp.37-38.

²⁰ Hasan Zaheer, *The Separation of East Pakistan: The Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism* (UK: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 232-234.

²¹ Many factors, such as the geographical and Socio-cultural difference between the two wings, the language issue, the economic disparity and exploitation of the East-Pakistan, disparity in civil service and armed forces, differences over constitution making, the

degeneration of Muslim League and the rise of regional Bengali Parties, and the political grievances and alienation of East Pakistan, were responsible for the process of decay that finally resulted in the loss of East Pakistan and the dismemberment of the country. Javed Iqbal, "The Separation of East-Pakistan: Analyzing the Causes and Fixing the Responsibility" in *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 2, July-December 2008, pp. 53-74.

²² The first partition of Bengal during the British rule was effective from 1905 till 1911. For detail see Abul Asad, *Eksho Basorer Rajniti {Politics of One Hundred Years}* (Dhaka: Bangla Shahitta Parishad, 1994), 255-272. (The original book is in Bengali language).

²³ Syed Shahid Hussain, *What was Once East Pakistan* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 301.

²⁴ Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition 1932-1947* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 129.

²⁵ Stanley Maron, "The Problem of East Pakistan" in *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Jan 1955), pp.132-144.

²⁶ Syed Umar Hayat, "The Communal Award and Its Aftermaths in Bengal: A Study of Ghuznavi-Burdwan Pact of 1937" in *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XI, No. 1, January-June 1990, pp. 66-68.

²⁷ Syeda Nasreen Sultana, "Freedom Movement: Some New Addition to NIHCR Library" in *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XI, No. 2, July-December 1994.

²⁸ *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, (Islamabad: National Archives of Pakistan), File No. 204.

²⁹ Kishwar Sultana, *Politics of the All-India Muslim League 1924-1940* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 213.

³⁰ Being the only Political Organization of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, the All-India Muslim League since its formation took the responsibility to infuse a new life into the Muslim of India and to make them politically aware in order not be exploited by the other communities of the subcontinent. *Ibid*, pp. 213-215.

³¹ Syed Umar Hayat, ed., *Quaid-i-Azam – Allamah Raghīb Ahsan Correspondence, 1936-1947* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, 2010), pp. 301-310.

³² Sirkandar Hayat, *Aspects of Pakistan Movement* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2016), p.214.

³³ Noor-ul-Haq, *Making of Pakistan: The Military Perspective* ((Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2016), pp. 34-35.

³⁴ Z.H. Zaidi, "Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy" in Phillips ed. *The Partition of India* (UK: Leeds University Press, 1967), p. 234.

³⁵ V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (USA: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 438.

³⁶ Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wanted the Muslims to realize that they had their own political interests, as a community, which must be secured and promoted through their own separate group life. He refused to accept the claim made by the newly formed Indian Nation Congress that India was one nation and that the congress had therefore the right to speak on their behalf too. Hayat, *Aspects of Pakistan Movement*, p. 5.

³⁷ Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 59.

³⁸ The Krishak Proja Party was headed by Sher-e-Bangal A.K. Fazlul Huq with apparently secular political entity. The primary programme of the party was to facilitate the lower strata of the Bengali society especially the Muslim population. But ultimately the party lost its popularity *viz a viz* the politics of All India Muslim League politics in Bengal. For details see, Abul Mansur Ahmad, *Amar Dekha Rajniteer Ponchash Basar, {Witness to Fifty Years of Politics}* (Dhaka: Srijan Prokashoni Limited, 1988), 144-162 (The original book is in Bengali language).

³⁹ The Bengal Provincial Muslim League in its Annual Report submitted in 1944 claimed that the league had become a “revolutionary” and “mass movement” with no less than 550,000 members enrolled a figure that exceeded the number ever scored by any organization in the province not excluding Congress. Hayat, *Aspects of Pakistan Movement*, p. 214.

⁴⁰ Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power, Vol. II* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1971), p. 423.

⁴¹ Syed Sharfuddin Pirzada, ed. *Foundation of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents (1906-1947)*, vol. I (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2007), pp. 80-81.

⁴² Sheikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mehmood Hassan, Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Ahmad Saeed Dehlavi, Mufti Muhammad Naeem Ludhianvi, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, Maulana Bashir Ahmad Bhatta, Maulana Syed Gul Badsha, Maulana Abdul Haleem Siddiqui, Maulana Noor-ud-Din Bihari and Maulana Abdul Bari Firangi Mehil were the leading figures of Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind. Rozina Parveen, *Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind Dastawezat-e- Markazi Ijlasha-e- Aam1919-45*, (Urdu) Vol.I, (Islamabad: Qaumi Idara Barai Tahqeeq-i-Tarikh wa Saqfat), p. 111.