

The Role of the Left in Bangladesh’s Democracy: Challenges and Prospects

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Introduction

The modern democracies have rendered the party system as an indispensable factor in every political society. Undeniable is the fact that party politics have become a universal phenomenon and this is evident from the ever growing concern for the ways in which political leaders, social groups and political parties strive to achieve political power. Therefore it becomes a necessity to study them carefully in order to critically understand the functioning of the polity. While doing so one has to consider the fact that in most of the South Asian countries party system does not have a linear path of evolution or development. Their long and shared historical legacies play a significant role in making of their political systems. Varying and intermittent spells of democracy and authoritarianism engulf many of the nations as a result of which party systems also develop in a manner uncommon to each other and common features are thus not clearly identifiable as are found in many of the western democracies.ⁱ But despite their speckled characteristics they continue to be the vital conditions of modern political processes as their emergence and functioning presuppose a necessary degree of social development, political consciousness, and popular desire for democracy. Therefore, considering the several factors that illustrate the varied functioning of the party system such as the nature of social composition, economic divisions, religious and ethnic affiliations, cultural diversities and political differences over matters of internal and external policy of the state and so on—one needs to carefully evaluate their role.

In Bangladesh also a viable form of party system prevails. Like many other South Asian countries, here political parties have not evolved from within the legislatures as in some of the western countries nor have they followed Maurice Duverger’s theorization of the formulation of the party systems within parliamentⁱⁱ. Instead, political parties have come into existence following the hands of the nationalist leaders who steered the nation out from the colonial yoke then through the struggle for national liberation and subsequently from the problems of highly unstable political developments in the aftermath of political independence. Bangladesh's political scene has been tumultuous ever since the country’s inception. Periods of democratic rule have been interrupted by military coups, martial law, and states of emergency. In the midst of this confusing scene, there are five major political forces that operate significantly in the countryⁱⁱⁱ. At the foremost is the ruling AL party which has now transformed into a centre/centre-left political party after its birth as a socialist organization under the founding leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The main opposition is led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its allies which form the right-of-centre to conservative grouping in Bangladesh. To the extreme right or left, lies another set of political groups which although not supported by a large fraction of the populace, is typified by having very dedicated followers. To the extreme right is a group

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of parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikyo Jote, who calls for an increased role for Islam in public life. To the left lies an array of splinter groups including the pro-Soviet Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), factions of the Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), the Workers Party and other socialist groups who advocate revolutionary changes in the society but do not comprise of a unified whole. Finally the fifth major party is the Jatiyo Party (JP) party founded by ex-military ruler General Ershad, which though ideologically not too different from the AL or the BNP supports Islamisation of Bangladesh and operates independently^{iv}.

In this context the current essay will focus on the role of the Left in Bangladesh polity which in spite of their considerably long political existence fails to emerge as a viable political force. Thus a brief evolutionary background of the Left since the time of independence will be laid in the first section to understand their contextual existence in the country. This will lead us to critically evaluate their position in the present political scenario with due consideration of the important challenges that they face in the second section. Furthermore, by addressing some of the significant socio-economic and political factors such as the class dynamics, global economic and electoral trend some crucial pointers are intended to be identified to assess their credibility and relevance in Bangladesh politics. Through the following three sections of the essay a careful probe into the characteristic features of the Left in Bangladeshi democracy will be thus attempted.

Evolution and Position of the Left in Bangladesh

The Left in Bangladesh has a long and strong legacy dating back to the time of the country's struggle for independence or even prior to that. But it was the Liberation War of 1971 that sowed the seeds for unifying the much diversified political forces of the country. Ideologically the Left was belligerent which got integrated by the nationalist agenda of independence. They joined together with the other political forces of the country and primarily the AL, to overthrow the twenty-three years of exploitative rule of West Pakistan. During the time of the independence the primary task of the Left was to build popular consciousness and to propagate unity among the mass against the Pakistani forces. This nationalist agenda was complemented by their struggle against the imperialist forces of the world in general. It was the Leftists who felt the need for uniting and organizing the people from even the lower rung of the society like the working class, peasants, and laborer class—to harness the support for national unity and freedom from the international community. Thus organizing the volunteers, training the freedom fighters and ordered propaganda were a means of their functioning at that time. They played an invincible role in popularizing their national toil along with the AL^v. But immediately after the independence in 1971, a large number of party supporters left the country and went to India. Around 6000 party supporters, leaders and members settled in the adjoining states of West Bengal, Tripura and Meghalaya as a result of which the integrated strength of the party suffered a major halt. They faced the primary challenge of re-organizing themselves into a coherent force thereafter. However, the agenda of the Left in Bangladesh should not be considered as only vital during the nationalist struggle. They continued to function as a potent force in post-independent Bangladesh in lieu of their broader vision to develop a free space for economic and administrative advancement of the country. They provided a model in front of the nascent state that was not built exclusively upon nationalist ideals but also from the perspective of the toiling masses, so that a non-exploitative and free society can be fashioned. It was this mass appeal and the inclusive vision of uniting the downtrodden of the society into the mainstream that signified

the role of the Communist Party in Bangladesh. The Left thus earned its credibility by stressing upon this aspect of the then Bangladeshi society that was not strongly sought by even the most popular AL party during its early days of nation building^{vi}.

However, today the political Left in Bangladesh, represented both by a number of socialist as well as communist parties, is numerically small and significantly divided by internal dissensions. These differences are deep and evolutionary. The Left was marked by a discernible division between the Maoist and Stalinist currents since long time back. Likewise the Communist Party of East Pakistan (Bangladesh since 1971); which was the primary Leftist political force in the country and which drew much of its historical legacy from the Communist Party of India (CPI); was divided between a pro-Moscow wing and a pro-Beijing wing. While the former was considered as one of the main unifiers of popular support and strength for the liberation struggle, belonging to the neighboring Indo-Soviet socialist camp and as the propagator of worldwide communist revolution, peace, independence and democracy; the later was considered as pro-Pakistan in its overtures supported by the imperialist and reactionary powers like the United States and China.^{vii} This internal divisions in their ideology resulted into two radically opposed positions of the communist party during the war of liberation in 1971. The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), which was pro-Moscow ideologically, supported the war of liberation and avowed for the establishment of socialism in Bangladesh along the parliamentary road. This orientation led it to associate more closely with the AL which emerged as the dominant power immediately after the war of liberation.

The pro-Beijing wing on the other hand, following the Maoist position was opposed to the partition of Pakistan and did not support the war of liberation. It radically advocated total revolution based on the Maoist model and considered the Bangladesh liberation movement as an 'unfinished revolution'. This group was comprised of the various Leftist underground parties who rejected Mujib's socialism as a 'petty-bourgeois' ideology and subsequently discarding it wanted to establish a socialist state in Bangladesh inspired by the Chinese revolution^{viii}. One of the most significant radical militia leaders of this thread was Siraj Sikder who led the East Bengal's Workers Movement (EBWM) since January 1968 and later formed the Purbo Bangla Sarbohara Party (PBSP- East Bengal Proletarian party) on January 3, 1971. The Sarbahara Party actively joined hands with Mukti Bahini (Liberation Army) to fight against Pakistan in the liberation war. But when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formed his own militia namely the Mujib Bahini (Mujib's Army) sidelining the Leftists within the guerrilla army, the Sharbahara Party got dissociated from the mainstream. It did not accept the liberation and instead envisaged to replace the 'petty-bourgeois puppet government' with a revolutionary socialist system. Their subsequent threats and militant activities against the newly formed government led to the growing chaos that brought Mujib down finally in 1975. But this strand faced a significant impediment with the decline of Maoist ideology in China and rendered the Bangladeshi revolutionaries without major ideological support from abroad^{ix}.

Today the Left-wing underground militias function primarily in the rural areas. Having no coherent ideology their doctrines often act against the interests of the communists, secularists and the women like that of the Islamists. They often emerge as 'village arbitrators' with their monopolization of the traditional village arbitration institution named *Salish* and are heavily criminalized. Thus being stigmatized as 'outlaws' by the law-enforcing agencies they now struggle incessantly for their own survival^x. The Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) is

another such Maoist splinter organizations in Bangladesh that has a revolutionary agenda of capturing state power through armed struggle. Drawing its inspiration from the Chinese revolution it believes in the rise of China to pave the ways for the realization of their goals. Nevertheless, the PBCP cadres have been reportedly involved in acts of murder, robbery, extortion, land grabbing and abduction for ransom and have significantly spread their influence in the south-western regions of Bangladesh, bordering the Indian State of West Bengal and the north-east^{xi}. The other party namely the Purbo Bangla Sarbohara Party (PBSP) that was founded by Siraj Sikder has been re-organizing itself as an underground force with its new generation cadres forming the Maoist Unity Group (MUG). It aims at confronting the state forces and developing the 'People's War', that had been foreseen by Sikder, through active militarization. However not all factions of the PBSP endorse this mission and contrarily believes in engaging in open politics by adopting a more moderate stance.

Under the successive military dictatorships in the later parts of the 1970s and 1980s, the difficulties of the Leftist, revolutionary and radical parties accentuated further reinforcing tendencies towards their continued divisions. After Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's assassination in 1975 the CPB faced enormous repression in the hands of the rightist military rule. The party leaders of the center and the district levels were indiscriminately arrested during this time and in October 1977 the CPB was declared banned. However, in 1978 the ban on the party was withdrawn and its leaders were released thereafter which the CPB participated in the general elections of 1978. But due to their consistent poor performance in terms of acquiring parliamentary seats, the CPB along with the other Leftist parties were forced into supporting roles within alliances with the major opposition parties. In the first and second general elections of 1973 and 1979 they could not capture a single parliamentary seat^{xii}. Subsequently the CPB joined the 15-party alliance led by AL in 1983 against the military rule of Hussain Muhammad Ershad and played a vital role in the movement to oust Ershad in 1990. But with the collapse of the Soviet socialism in 1991 the CPB faced another great ideological crisis. The party leaders got further divided into two camps. One favored the abolition of the CPB and its replacement by a new platform on democratic line, while the other favored maintaining the party in its original form. This conflict grew to be acute in 1993 when the two opposing groups arranged separate convention in Dhaka. The Marxist-Leninist group in their convention held on June 15, 1993; however resolved for the independent existence of the Communist Party in Bangladesh, and had their new central executive committee formed with Shahidullah Chowdhury as president and Mujahidul Islam Selim as General Secretary.^{xiii}

A more significant socialist party in the late 1980s was the Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal (National Socialist Party- JSD). This party began operating in 1972 after the defection of radical elements from the AL. It organized an armed opposition to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's regime in the mid-1970s and became very influential among the military dictators during the late 1970s. It formed its action wing namely the Jatiyo Sramik Jote (National Workers Alliance) with the help of which it gained popularity in the labour unions and earned some success in parliamentary elections. But by the 1980s, it also got split into a number of factions with different strategies. One wing, headed by A.S.M. Abdur Rab undertook policy measures that were almost indistinguishable from those of the Jatiyo Party of General Ershad. It cooperated with Ershad's government, praised his martial law rule, supported the move to include the armed forces in district councils and the denationalization bill of June 1987, and participated in the parliaments elected in 1986 and 1988. Another faction, was led by Shajahar Siraj, came to be known as the

Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal (Siraj). It participated in the 1986 Parliament but consistently voted against the government, calling for "unity of left democratic forces." Still another faction, namely the Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal (Inu), headed by Hasan Huq Inu, refused to cooperate with the government and became part of a highly visible five-party alliance along with the Sramik Krishak Samajbadi Dal, (Workers and Peasants Socialist Party); the Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (Bangladesh Socialist Party) which was again comprised of two factions; and the Workers Party. The Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal (Inu) operated a radical student front called the Jatiyo Chhatro Samaj (National Students Society)^{xiv}.

Thus what we see of the political Left in Bangladesh is that, it had been ridden by factionalism since the time of the country's inception and further fragmented into innumerable sections afterwards, rendering it much more diversified and weaker. While the inability of the political Left to draw a consensus among themselves drifted them away from capturing power at the centre; the active presence of the left-wing militant groups in the countryside poses a serious threat to Bangladesh's national security on the other hand^{xv}. Presently there are about two dozen Leftist political parties in Bangladesh, out of which only few are visibly active in terms of meetings, rallies and protests. Most of them restrict themselves to statements and press notes in the media and that too the others restrict themselves to insignificant ceremonial activities. In a way, many of these parties exist in name alone—with ineffectual leaders at their head and seemingly non-existent workers. They function primarily as prerogative to the ruling AL or the BNP as their singular parliamentary performances has been unfortunate. For instance, in the December 2008 parliamentary elections the JSD won 3 seats and the Workers Party won 2 seats contesting under the AL symbol of the boat. But while contesting in the same election under the JSD's own symbol (a flaming torch), its two other candidates failed miserably, as did the two other candidates contesting for the Workers Party. The other Left parties – including the CPB, National Awami Party (NAP), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), Gonotantri Party and Biplobi Workers Party – collectively floated 118 candidates in the national polls, but secured a combined total of less than 110,000 votes^{xvi}. Such pitiful results only re-emphasize the continuing weakness of Bangladesh's Left parties among the people triggering the interest to identify some of the possible factors that led to this plight of the Left in Bangladesh.

Factors affecting the role of the Left

Left in Bangladesh today is perhaps faced with the recurring question of: Why are they so persistently fragmented and disjointed? One of the primary reasons behind the disunity of the Left as identified by many of the analysts is that a general sense of mistrust prevails amongst the parties themselves which prevents their emergence as a unified front keeping their potential supporters away. Beginning with the ideological dilemma that had been stated before, they continue to remain diffused in their guiding motive even today. The inner-party functioning certainly contributes to the general sense of skepticism. The General-secretary of the Biplobi Workers Party, Saiful Haque; and the leader of the CPB, Mujaheedul Islam Selim stated that “many Left leaders today are unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices or take risks in the present political context. Such leaders are too ready to compromise with the ‘capitalist values’ in their eagerness to become MPs or ministers” as against the guiding principles of socialism. Other commentators, call the Left in Bangladesh as ‘dominantly pro-Indian’, and dictated by the political discourse of the US-led ‘war on terror’. They say that many leaders simply parrot US foreign-policy terms such as ‘fundamentalism’ and ‘Islamism’^{xvii} thereby tanning their own

credibility. Capitalism and increased consumerism thus plays a vital role here in disillusioning the Left from their socialist goals and secondly the long hankering for political power acts as another factor that leads the Left to associate diversely for sheer calculated benefit. About two dozen Left political parties today consider themselves as ‘hardcore’ communists. But careful analysis will show that only – the CPB, BSD (Khalequzzaman), (Lt.) Nirmal Sen, NAP (Muzaffar), Badaruddin Umar and a few others – have remained faithful to Left ideology, despite splits and rifts along the way. The others merely act like opportunists with a Left facade.

Secondly, another factor preventing the unification of the Left is the lack their own Class analysis. The basic condition for the formation of a united Left front is the maintenance of a separate and distinct organizational identity with a certain unity of purpose, unity of approach and goals^{xviii}. The Bangladesh polity underwent through subsequent bouts of civilian, military and democratic rules. But each of them tends to protect the same class interests more or less in order to sustain their regime’s legitimacy. Thus within the given class framework the interests of the various social groups such as the industrial, financial, trading class, the bureaucracy, intellectuals, political elites etc. are more or less similarly meted out. This has rendered the Left with lesser choice to cultivate a separate class allegiance of their own. As a result of which they are widely found to associate with the other political forces. The Left and right forces in Bangladesh are both from the middle classes and in this respect the Left fails as they cannot readily declass themselves, and thus at the same time cannot uphold the aspirations of the people. They remain in a fluxed position gravitating towards the right on one hand, whereas opposing the rightist revolutionary and democratic forces on the other.

However, there is another significant dimension to this class aspect in Bangladesh. The socio-political practice in Bangladesh largely resembles that of a ‘spoils system’ where a significant degree of cultural degeneration has occurred. Social activist and theorist Badruddin Umar terms this as ‘cultural poverty of the ruling classes’. He states that “the role of the intellectuals and cultural workers as social prop of the propertied ruling class is common to all societies which are divided into classes”—and Bangladeshi experience is no exception to this^{xix}. They get aligned to the various political parties and become their prerogative and pay allegiance to them for political benefits. This group includes the writers, teachers, performing artists like actors, singers and so on who are different from the mere party cadres adding an exceptional flavor to the dominant rule. Bangladeshi intellectuals also reflect very authentically all the basic features of the ruling classes including their cultural poverty. Many of the Leftist political leaders and activists also fall in this category of intellectuals. In post independent Bangladesh the CPB led by Moni Singh in absence of political line distinct from the AL, worked as its cultural wing. Even today, most of the Leftists support the ruling AL party although they refrain from defying the principles of the ruling political parties overtly. What we find is a gradual co-option of the Leftists with the ruling parties leading to the gradual suppression of the individual worth of the former^{xx}. On the whole, the absence of a coherent class interest acts as the primary impediment for the Left unification which is all the more heightened by the camaraderie of the intellectual class in the society.

Thirdly, the Leftist parties lack in forming effective organization due to their non-inclusiveness. Apart from some of the above mentioned Left parties which are comparatively well organized; there are two other types of parties which belong to the Left. One that is radical Left which indulges in terrorist activities and is virtually alienated from the people; and the other that is neither election-oriented nor inclined to terrorism. The former have no clearly defined social

bases or dominant ideological commitments and hence fails to organize properly the working masses and direct them towards specific political targets. They are rootless reactionary political forces as opposed to the earlier mentioned Left parties which fail to initiate, direct and organize political movements in the interest of the working people. However, it is in the second type of Leftist political groups in whom one may find great socio-political possibilities. These are moderate groups that work in the interest of the workers, peasants and all kinds of the working people following a clearly defined ideological basis and at a more grassroots level. Many such sporadic groups are even found to be working for the cause of indigenous people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and other tribal areas. Given the significance of such works capable of delivering outstanding results in social justice, (especially in the troubled peripheries of the state like the CHT), it is important to harness their potentials. The goal of much aspired democratic revolution and socialism can only be achieved if these groups are co-opted within the mainstream Left orbit. When these several strands work separately they provide a diffracted picture of the Left altogether. It is thus important to re-think about re-organizing the myriad Leftist political forces who although work unnoticeably at the deep societal levels fail to mark a line in the eyes of the national populace.

Relevance and Significance of the Left in present Bangladesh

However, in the final analysis it will be unwise to say that the Left has obliterated completely from the orbit of politics in Bangladesh or they have lost all their relevance and significance. It is the Left, after all, that is most vocal in protests about vital national issues such as oil, gas, seaports, and the Phulbari coalmine or even the recent Shahbag Movement. In the recent mass uprising that triggered around the trials of the war criminals of the liberation struggle at Shahbag in Dhaka, one finds an active role of the various Left wing political parties. Apart from the ruling AL the Left political parties and their student wings which joined the rally, raised active protest slogans at the Gana Jagoran Manch and led the people's movement were the Worker's Party of Bangladesh, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) and Ganotantrik Bam Morcha.^{xxi} Such protests that already have or are yet to have a deep mark on the masses may be considered as a positive step indicating the required actions for broadening and reviving the scope and vitality of the Left.

Furthermore, in the recent political context of the country—where the state is literally ripped apart by the 'secularist' and the 'fundamentalist' forces and violent street politics—the role of the Left can be re-envisioned. Since February 2013, in Bangladesh the Shahbag Uprising had stirred the nation by severe violence perpetrated by the fundamentalist groups like the Jamat-e-Islami and the Hefazat-e-Islami who resorted to violent protest against the trials of the war criminals of 1971 genocide. This has become even more a serious issue as the BNP had openly stood by the sides of the Islamic radicals. As a counter force the secularist forces led by the AL and her allies raised the four fold demand for capital punishment for Abdul Quader Mollah and other war criminals. However since no steps were beyond the meticulous calculations of winning the electoral seats in the forthcoming tenth *Jatiya Sangsad* elections one has to consider the inherent nuances. The onslaught of Islamic fundamentalism and perplexing rivalry between the BNP and the AL has created a vitiated political landscape where one can evidently witness an uptight national population anemic and apathetic to the entire state of political affairs. The common people at large accord seemingly less trust in either of the two major political parties but fails to envisage the future beyond them. It is in this context one might have located the

significant role of the Left as a viable alternative in the national politics. Ever since the democratic transition of the state in 1990s, only the BNP and the AL had been systematically alternating their political power at the centre with no scope of any other opposition. The Left with their continuous movement against the extreme rightist forces should have utilized this scope to mark a strong ground in the wake of challenging communalism. But although the recent democratic uprising of Shahbag—which is significantly one of its own kind in the history of Bangladesh—hinted upon a decisive role of the Left as a potent political force; the political reality after the tenth *Jatiya Sangsad* elections held on January 5, 2014 reflected a picture of missed opportunity. Contesting under the AL’s electoral symbol of “Boat” to win their respective seats the Workers Party (WP, Menon) acquired only 6 or 2% seats whereas the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD, Inu) managed 5 or 2% seats reducing the hope of the revival of the unified Left in Bangladesh at its lowest^{xxii}. It would have been noteworthy if the dichotomy between secular nationalism and religious fundamentalism that exists in Bangladesh had given way to a politics of Left versus the non-Left instigating in return a fresh impetus to the democracy that is been cherished in the country.

Lastly, but not the least with the onset of globalization and the collapse of the Soviet Union there has been a significant upsurge of capitalism and consumerism all over the world. The impact of the same can be observed in Bangladesh. Bangladesh like many other third world countries of South Asian quite un-astonishingly balances her tradition with modernity in keeping with the modern times. While on one hand, one can find some of the most advanced city structures staring from lavish apartments to huge shopping complexes (Vasundhara City); one may likewise find the old city delights like the famous colorful rickshaws of Dhaka honking all over the city nooks and crevasses putting the city traffic at loggerheads. As the numerous outlets of BFC (Best Fried Chicken), Pizza Hut and several other expensive restaurants hail eloquently the banner of global consumerism; it feels equally defeating to find the outsized number of beggars on the city roads. All these readily reflect the growing influence of capitalism and the presence of wide social disparity in the present Bangladeshi society like in many other nations of South Asia. The ill-effects of heightened capitalism may be perhaps further understood in the context of the greatest industrial catastrophe that occurred in the recent past. The collapse of the illegally constructed nine-storied Rana Plaza complex in April 2013, claiming lives of over a thousand garment factory workers (one of the biggest industrial debacle in Bangladesh’s history) reveals the high exploitation level that prevails in the Ready Made Garments (RMG) sector—which is the most significant economic sector of Bangladesh. The plight of the garment factory workers, and reports about their poor working conditions and wages published after the incident and the subsequent sanctions by the western investors for maintaining safety standards and necessary labour conditions signifies the social need of the Bangladeshi society^{xxiii}. The tragedy of the Rana Plaza immediately after the Shahbag Movement signifies another pointer that shows how reluctantly the ever engulfing consumerism and capitalism are been handled by the state. It is here, the Leftists could have capitalised their ideological role as effective promoters of socialism fulfilling the lacunae of the existing government widening their credibility and relevance in the Bangladeshi society.

Conclusion

All together it may be stated that the Left in Bangladesh are indeed a significant political force that has been functioning since ages. But the gradual unfolding of the state operations has

rendered them weak, fragmented and thus powerless. So much so, that in spite of their consistent presence in the social and political ambit of the polity they are most often considered as redundant. However in the global context of today one may locate the possibilities of their renewed importance. The Bangladeshi polity which is essentially a transitioning third world state is riddled by the numerous obstacles on its way towards development and progress. Likewise, we can experience the various good as well as ill effects of modernity and antiquity. Globalization and capitalism with its emphasis on market driven economy is one such necessary evil that entangles the state into its cob-web at a greater social cost. Similarly, the inherent Class structure of the society prevents the formation of a coherent alternative force whilst the Frankenstein of religious fanaticism in the name of 'Islam' consistently beset the harmony of the state. All these factors are mutually inter-related to one another in the leeway and create a complete flux in the body politics of Bangladesh altogether. But it is this impasse that one may consider as the most opportune moment to re-envision the role of the Left in Bangladesh; that hold the immense possibilities to infuse the much needed impetus to its state of democracy.

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