

## Islamic Political Parties in Contemporary Bangladesh: Paragons of Democratic Politics, or Rent-Seeking Parasites?

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### *Abstract:*

*A variety of Islamic political parties proliferate the South and South-East Asian nations, most of which advocate a sharia-based form of government. This paper articulates the political participation of Islamic parties in Bangladesh and attempts to delineate the nature of their participation in more recent times. While Islamic political parties in Bangladesh fall between a range of political ideologies, their activities, especially their nature of participation in the 2018 general elections, were far removed from those stated ideologies and fell more in-line with exploitative rent-seeking models of politics.*

### *Keywords:*

*political party; Islam; rent-seeking; clientelism; consensus*

### I. Introduction

In 2018 Bangladesh hosted its 11th parliamentary election; an election marred by violence (Limaye, 2018), and regarded by many as one of its most controversial (Riaz A., 2019). The politics of the 2018 election, and after, were a long time in the making, but Islamic political parties failed to play any significant part in it, even though Islamic political parties have in the past contributed to the making and remaking of national politics in Bangladesh (Khan, Islam, & Haque, 2008; Jahan, 2015). This paper takes a closer look at the Islamic political parties currently operating in Bangladesh and sheds light on the nature of their political participation.

Since the nation's independence in 1971 Islamic parties have failed to gain commanding support from the populace, still they have had a claim to enough political support in all of these countries to have a significant impact on the nations' political process. The impact of a religious political-identity, more specifically a Muslim identity, has had a discernible effect in shaping national political culture, especially post-1975 (Hossain, 2015; Kabir, 1987). This paper articulates the current state of Islamic parties in Bangladesh. It does a comparative analysis of their contribution to democratic politics in Bangladesh, versus pursuing a rent-seeking model of (Krueger, 1974; Tullock, 1993). It argues that under current circumstances most of these parties are not fulfilling any of the active responsibilities of a political party in a democratic system (Duverger, 1967; Sartori, 2005; Ware, 1996), but rather are acting as self-serving rent-seekers. We look at the nature and intensity of participation of these parties in the 2018 General Elections, and from their actions, we draw our conclusions that most of these parties are neither seeking to represent their constituencies nor seeking specific policy agendas.

## II. Review of Literature

Rent seeking is, at its core, a rather intuitive and straightforward idea that people will try to obtain benefits for themselves through the political arena. Rent-seeking, then, describes the unproductive and expropriative actions that benefit the perpetrator but not society (Dabla-Norris & Wade, 2001, p. 3; Krueger, 1974). While some researchers have sought evidence for rent-seeking from productive activities (Baumol, 1990; Acemoglu & Verdier, 1998; Murphy, Shleifer, & Vishny, 1993), it has generally been found to contribute significantly to income inequality, and it siphons off a large chunk of the social surplus to the patronage network of the political party in power (Stiglitz, 2012). In this paper, we shall seek to find the intent among Islamic parties in Bangladesh to appropriate economic or political rents through their coalition formation with the dominant parties, or through lending support to the dominant parties.

Rent-seeking behavior in the political realm is pursued within the more extensive network of patronage links and clientelist ties. In this milieu, we define patronage ties as an asymmetrical relationship (Powell, 1970) based on dyadic exchanges between “actors of unequal power and status”, and “the principle of reciprocity” (Kaufman, 1974, p. 285; Piattoni, 2001). With an iron-fisted control of government for over a decade, the Awami League (AL) plays the role of the dominant patron. Democracy, at least when it is working, is based on the principles of citizen’s rights, but when democracy is in abeyance the ‘logic of exchange’ on which clientelism is based takes deep roots (Hilgers, 2012, p. 7), and further strengthens the mutually beneficial network of relationships (Roniger, 1990). Thus, findings that support the rent-seeking model might also point rather directly to a lack of democratic practices in Bangladesh.

### 2.1 Political Parties

Political parties have been the primary vehicles of societal mobilization since the very inception of the modern democratic system. They have the onus of representing the public. As such their tasks take on two dimensions, the first is representing societal groups (Duverger, 1967; Diamond & Gunther, 2001) and second, related more to elections, is their role in coalition formation (Lijphart, 2008; Sartori, 2005). Political parties create political legitimacy by facilitating societal representation, issue structuring and mobilization, ensuring accountability of government, managing inter and intra-group conflict, and possibly actuating societal and national integration (Lapalombara & Weiner, 1966; Duverger, 1967; Sartori, 2005; Diamond & Gunther, 2001; Jahan, 2015).

To represent its constituents in government, political parties that might not have a majority support to win elections outright, must actively solicit the potential to become attractive coalition partners. They might also pursue the exact opposite, what Sartori calls “blackmail potential” which is the possibility of empowering an opposition party through a strong coalition with them (Sartori, 2005, p. 108). Of course, parties can also create policy based coalitions (Lijphart, 1999, pp. 81-83) which some of the Islamic parties did leading up to the 2001 General Elections (Jahan, 2015; Riaz A., 2016), but that too did not live up to its potential.

### 2.2 Islamic Parties

Islamic political parties in the modern world do not proceed from any single trend but rather are a novel set of entities, many of which were born as a response to European colonialism (Ahmad, 2009; Azmeh, 2016; Salih & El-Tom, 2009; Soage, 2014). In Bengal,

especially East Bengal, the search for a Muslim political identity accelerated in the eighteenth century as a response to the myriad repressions accorded by the policies of the Raj and the actions of the Hindu landlords (Hossain, 2015, p. 375; Bose, 1986; Khan Z. R., 1985). Movements like the Faraizi movement and Titu Meer's revolt, (Islam S., 2007), spurred from an aim to purge un-Islamic practices (Kabir, 1987, p. 478).

By 1975 a host of military coups had completely changed the political landscape in Bangladesh, and the new government of General Ziaur Rahman took significant steps to move the nation from a secular to a more religious stance (Riaz A., 2016). He also rescinding the ban on religious parties, causing the reintegration of JI into the political foray (Riaz & Raji, 2011, p. 49), and the inclusion of new Islamic parties like the Bangladesh Khilafat Andolan (BKA) under the leadership of clerics (Ahmed & Nazneen, 1990, p. 802). One of the reasons behind this reintegration and reinvigoration of Islamic parties was geopolitical: to assert Bangladesh's sovereignty vis-à-vis India, befriend the OIC nations, and lean towards the pro-US camp during the height of the Cold War (Murshid, 1997, p. 15).

Post-1991, with the fall of General Ershad's authoritarian regime, electoral competition between the BNP and the AL saw them both competing to attract the Islamic parties into their own foray. The JI actively participated in the anti-Ershad movement and in the 1991 General Elections they were able to secure 18 seats and 12.2% of the total votes cast (Khan, Islam, & Haque, 2008, p. 64). In 1996 JI sided with the AL against the BNP, but in 2001 the JI and the BNP formed a new ruling coalition, and the two parties have been together since. The Islami Oikyajote (IOJ) was also in that ruling coalition with the BNP.

The 2001 BNP-JI coalition government was the first time an Islamic party wielded governmental power. Between September 15 and October 27, 2001, about 330 incidents of violence against Hindu communities were reported in leading national newspapers (Islam M. S., 2011). The inclusion of the JI and the IOJ reportedly saw a rise of intolerance and attacks on all minorities (Riaz & Fair, 2011, p. 1) This was also the time when extremist organizations like the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Harkat-ul Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJIB) started terrorizing the polity (Jahan, 2015, pp. 51-52). Regardless of the strong correlation with geopolitical developments (Salih & El-Tom, 2009), both Islamist movements and Islamic parties were on the rise.

In 1970 there were 11 Islamic parties, by 2006 there were a 100 (Riaz & Raji, 2011, p. 46). A Nielsen-Bangladesh survey in 2016 showed that for 74% of the population religion was "very" or "somewhat" influential in their "day-to-day views and opinions" (Lorch, 2019, p. 266). The combined vote share of the Islamic parties in the four general elections between 1991 and 2008 were, 14.41% in 1991, 9.7% in 1996, 4.97% in 2001, and 6.27% in 2008 (Riaz A., 2014, pp. 163-165).

In recent decades pro-Islamist ideologies have been further fueled by geopolitical developments, chief among which has been the USA's post 911 policies. They have helped push Islamic political parties further right and inflame a passion among the Muslim masses (Salih & El-Tom, 2009, p. 10). Ideologues like Ayman Al-Zawahiri, who considered democracy a form of shirk, illegitimate, have found countless sympathetic ears (Soage, 2014, p. 99). And extreme Islamist ideas on law and governance (Siddiqui, 1985, p. 13), and ideas espoused by thinkers like Hassan al-Banna and Abul A'la Maududi regarding the divergence between "Islamic governance" and "democratic governance" have gained significant clout (Voll, 2007, p. 172). Most Islamists

today, however, focus on how Islam prescribes very specifically a particular form of polity in accord with the divine will (Nettler, 2002, p. 52).

Many of the Islamic political parties in Bangladesh ideologically profess sharia-based governance (Riaz & Raji, 2011), even if most fail to show any consistent commitment to that ideology. Inconsistencies are of course expected of political parties participating in electoral competition (Sinno & Khanani, 2009). However, parties like the Muslim League (ML) have no such ideological bent, even if they have historically represented the Muslim population (Jalal, 1994; Maniruzzaman, 2013, pp. 75-76). In most denominations of Islamic parties, the ML would fail to make a place for itself (Nazar, 2016; Riaz & Raji, 2011). For this study, though, we shall not differentiate between such orientations, but look at all the political parties that claim to be, or are identified popularly as, Islamic parties.

### III. Research Method

In this paper we use dual methodology of collecting information on all Islamist parties in Bangladesh through scurrying through secondary literature from an exhaustive list of academic and news sources, and polling data, and collecting primary data through more than two dozen unstructured interviews with senior leaders of all of the Islamist parties currently in operation. We then sort that information through two specific filters of rent-seeking analysis (Dabla-Norris & Wade, 2001, p. 3; Krueger, 1974; Tullock, 1993) to see if these parties are they currently operate are actually rent-seeking parasites or working toward greater democratic or other ideological goals.

The period between 2010 and 2020 has been a trying time for democracy in Bangladesh. In this period two General Elections were held, the first of which in 2014 went largely uncontested, with 153 of the 300 parliamentary seats won by AL candidates unopposed, giving the AL a total tally of 234 seats. The 2014 election was largely derided as not being a legitimate process (Riaz A. , 2019), and as such it would be expected of the AL to try and entice other parties, especially Islamic parties to its foray in the 2018 elections, because when secular parties lack democratic legitimacy they tend to veer towards Islamic actors or Islamization (Malik, 1986; Parmentier, 1999; Khan K. , 2013; Kubicek, 2015), or coopt an Islamic party to confer legitimacy (Sinno & Khanani, 2009, p. 36), especially in a country where religion is regarded as highly politically relevant (Lorch, 2019).

The 2018 election, following that 2014 debacle, calls into question the nation's political culture, and as such, this paper looks briefly at cultural causes for rent-seeking behavior as well. Political culture always has a significant impact on political developments (Almond & Verba, 1963), but political developments can also have a symbiotic effect on molding political culture. As one study suggests, the current political culture in Bangladesh has been shaped by the forces of "atomism, patron-clientelism and neo-patrimonialism" (Khan, Islam, & Haque, 2008, p. 3).

Politics of patronage has been the norm in Bangladesh: "politics... has been the preserve of a very small, relatively homogeneous elite that shared a common education, culture, and ethos; interacts socially; and intermarries. This elite is comparatively recent with strong roots in the traditional countryside. Within this elite, leadership is highly personalized, based on patrimonial authority and loyalty, and maintained through a complex, informal network of patron-client relations" (Kochanek, 2000, p. 547).

## IV. Discussion

Between the years 1979 to 2001, a total of 35 Islamic parties contested elections (Riaz A., 2017, p. 83). That number quite clearly elucidates that neither have there been a shortage of Islamic parties in the country nor have they all been consistent and coherent organizations. There exist today 12 registered Islamic political parties, of which the IOJ is a coalition of smaller parties but is registered by the Election Commission of Bangladesh as a single party. Many other entities call themselves Islamic parties, but for our analysis, we shall look at the participation in the 2018 elections of these twelve.

Of these twelve some are clearly clerical parties (Nazar, 2016, p. 249) or as Riaz and Raji's taxonomy would brand them, idealist and orthodox parties (Riaz & Raji, 2011, p. 48), these are led by clerics and have a clear or implicit *sharia*-based ideology of statecraft. Apart from Zaker Party, Bangladesh Tariqat Federation (TF), Bangladesh Muslim League (ML), Bangladesh Muslim League -BML, and Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB), the rest are all tied to Islamic clerics with direct association with large madrasas. IAB is what Riaz and Razi would call a "Pir Centric" party along with the Zaker party, and TF, however unlike the latter the IAB espouses a hard-right *sharia*-based political ideology and the leaders of the party dim the margins between the "clerical" and the "pir centric" typologies (Islami Andolan, 2020).

During the run-up to the 2018 General Elections a host of Islamic parties, including Bangladesh Khilafat Andolan (BKA), ML, among others tried to enter into the AL's Grand Alliance (Chowdhury, 2017). The Zaker party also lobbied to the hilt to try and enter the AL coalition (Release, 2018). However, none of these parties were able to secure the AL symbol or enter the AL coalition, but that does not mean they did not receive the government's patronage in other forms. By 2017 the intelligence services were also negotiating with Islamic parties, excluding the JI, to form a separate alliance to weaken the BNP. They reportedly doled out between 250 and 500 million takas to some of these parties (Lorch, 2019, p. 271).

All the parties already in either the AL or BNP alliance also lobbied to contest the election with the AL or BNP symbols respectively, which included the TF with AL; Jamiyate Ulemaye Islam Bangladesh (JUIB) with BNP; IOJ with BNP; and the Khilafat Majlish with BNP (UNB, 2018; Hasan, 2018).

In the end, 11 of the 13 Islamic parties joined in the 2018 elections using their own symbols (the JI were revoked their symbol, and the TF was the only Islamic party to get the AL symbol).

The vote counts of the 2018 elections are suspect due to strong allegations of vote-rigging and voter suppression (Limaye, 2018; Riaz A., 2019). However, the number of candidates posted by each of the parties is indicative of their nature of political engagement. Among the parties that nominated more than 20 candidates, of which there are six, only the IAB had not pursued an alliance with any of the major parties or directly sought government patronage. All the other parties including the Zaker Party, BKA, ML, had multiple engagements with the ruling regime, AL, and kowtowed to the regime to receive a place in the ruling alliance (Release, 2018; Chowdhury, 2017). All of these parties did have engagements with the ruling regime or the government, and there is evidence that they received patronage from the government before and during the election (Lorch, 2019).

Apart from the IAB all the parties played a role in the 2018 elections that were contrary to their stated goals, unrepresentative of their constituency, and most of their effort at seeking coalitions were more in a rent-seeking capacity than furthering party ideals. And to illustrate that we take a look at each of these 12 parties.

The two parties with the highest number of candidates fielded and the most votes won were the IAB and the Zaker Party, and both being putative “Pir” based parties. There is, however, a big gulf between the two. In preparations of its 2018 election campaign the leaders of the Zaker party vigorously pursued an alliance with the ruling AL, i.e. enter the AL led Grand Alliance (Release, 2018). They also hosted talks with other parties, if perchance their coalition with the AL was not forthcoming<sup>i</sup>. One of the key points of negotiation with the AL was the party chairman’s parliamentary ticket: Faisal Mujaddedi, chairman of Zaker Party, desired the parliamentary seat from his native Faridpur, a stronghold of the AL, and wanted the AL to either give him the AL symbol in that constituency or withhold from nominating any AL candidate there<sup>ii</sup>. It is arguable that nomination of candidates, including Faisal Mujaddedi, could have been the cause of the failure of forging the coalition with the AL, or it might just have been AL’s disinterest in enlarging the size of their Grand Alliance. As a traditional “Pir” based party, the Zaker Party, has a reserved vote bank of devotional followers, and as the party is based on one of the most popular mystic Pirs in Bangladesh, so they probably did present a reasonable coalition potential to the AL.

Another attribute to their 2018 campaign that stood out was the party chairman and high official’s, much-publicized visit to India and meetings with high-ranking BJP leaders (Correspondent, 2018). The party’s actions leading up to the 2018 elections seem to have been based more on forging a coalition with the AL than anything else, and if the nomination of party chairman was the primary issue on the coalition agenda<sup>iii</sup> than we can argue that the party’s aims were more in keeping with the rent-seeking model.

The IAB is a strictly orthodox party with an ideological basis rooted deeply in *sharia* (Islami Andolan, 2020). They are the only party in the list that has had a consistent program of activism throughout the last decade, and a large part of their reach to various constituencies is based on religious preaching, or *waz mahfils* (Riaz & Naser, 2011, p. 143), which they have effectively used to build a large support base, especially since the imposed ban on the JI. They have been unsuspectingly but effectively taking the place in Bangladesh electoral politics that once used to be filled by the JI (Bhattacharjee, 2020).

Only the IAB remained adamant about contesting the election on their own accord<sup>iv</sup> (Shakil, 2018). They have also consistently ranked first among all Islamic parties in all elections local and national, and have surreptitiously become the party contending for the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot and replacing the JP<sup>v</sup> (Bhattacharjee, 2020).

Bangladesh Khilafat Andolon (BKA) is a “cleric” based or “idealist” party and like most of the other cleric-based parties in this list, the party also adheres to a *sharia*-based model of governance, and it has a madrasa associated with it. The point of mentioning the madrasas, is that the body of the madrasa’s students, alumni, and their families usually form a stable, activist-pool and vote-bank for these parties. The BKA’s madrasa in the old part of Dhaka hosts a student body 5,000 strong<sup>vi</sup>.

Leading up to the 2018 elections the BKA also sought coalitions on multiple fronts, first and foremost with the ruling AL (Chowdhury, 2017), but also with a host of other parties

including the ML and the Nationalism Democratic Movement (NDM) <sup>vii</sup>. The party was also approached by state apparatus to fortify an anti-BNP alliance of Islamic parties <sup>viii</sup> (Lorch, 2019). It is also of note that one of the key issues in the coalitional agenda of the BKA was financing their candidates, and they were also alleged to have financial dealings with state apparatus <sup>ix</sup> (Lorch, 2019). These all tend to sway towards a rent-seeking model as well.

ML was among the Islamic parties that tried to enter into the AL Grand Alliance (Chowdhury, 2017). Given then political ideology of conservatism, they might have little in common on the policy front with the AL; nonetheless, there isn't as large an ideological gap between the ML and the AL as there are with other parties in this list.

Having failed to secure a place for themselves in the AL alliance, they pursued a broad-based coalition of multiple Islamic parties <sup>x</sup>. ML worked with multiple parties, including the Faraizi Andolon, who'd been with the IOJ, and the Nizam-e-Islam, who had split with the IOJ, and at the time unregistered NDM (Correspondent, 2019). Nizam-e-Islam were, however, actively in talks with the BNP for at least one ticket under the BNP's symbol for party chief, Mufti Izharul Islam <sup>xi</sup>. Finally, ML entered a coalition with NDM (Correspondent, 2018). NDM being unregistered at the time, all the nominees of the coalition ran on the ML symbol and is registered with the EC as ML candidates.

The Jamiyate Ulamye Islam Bangaldesh, Islamic Front Bangladesh was in the BNP coalition, and was also a member of IOJ The party's roots go as far back as 1909 (Riaz & Raji, 2011, p. 54), and has a number of the madrasas associated with the party, the most prominent of which is the Baridhara Nurani Madrasa, has a student body close to 3,000 <sup>xii</sup>. But they ultimately had no impact on the election.

The Islamic Front Bangladesh is in the AL Grand Alliance and only entered the 2018 general elections on their own ticket because they failed to secure any nominations from their coalition partner, the ruling AL. Not even the party chairman, Syed Bahadur Shah Mujaddedi, could secure an AL ticket. There is little evidence to the party leadership forging a path towards any other substantial democratic activity, and as such seem to be dependent completely on AL patronage. Thus, again satisfying the rent-seeking model.

The IOJ was formed in 1990 with seven Islamic parties including the Nizam-e-Islam, Khilafat Majlish, Faraizi Andolan and others (Riaz A., 2017, p. 84), however since then it has had a lot of its constituent parties leave the coalition. The only issue that each of these parties seemed to pursue were AL nominations. Thus, showing a tendency towards seeking patronage and undue rents.

Bangladesh Khlifaf Majlish professes a hard-right sharia-based ideology, and declaratively intends to replace the nation's democratic system with an Islamic system following the "prophet and khalifa-e-Rashedin" (Khan, Islam, & Haque, 2008, p. 111). And yet they, like other parties in this list, pursued a coalition with the ruling AL for the 2018 General Elections. The pursuit of an AL coalition partnership seems very much in keeping with a pursuit of AL patronage, which hints at rent-seeking behavior.

Bangladesh Islami Front forged an alliance with the government-backed opposition party the JP in 2017 (Amin, 2017). The alliance was meant to be a landmark affair, the same way the JP had forged an Islamic alliance in 2001 (Riaz A., 2017, p. 84) with a total of 58 parties partaking in the alliance. With the JP being a willing client of AL patronage throughout most of the AL's

tenure since 2009, it is not much of a stretch to assume that the Bangladesh Islami Front's alliance with the JP was also actuated by such intent of accruing AL patronage. It is no wonder then that their chief complain against their coalition partner JP was the lack of funds provided to them during the election<sup>xiii</sup>.

The Khilafat Majlish is a “cleric” based “ideological” party, with its Emir, Moulana Mohammad Ishak, being associated with the Jamia Rahmania Mohammadpur madrasa in the capital, Dhaka, with a large student-body (Khilafat Majlish, 2020). In 2006, prior to the brief military interregnum, the AL & Khilafat Majlish had forged an agreement that if the AL came to power, then it would not pass any law contrary to Koran (Lorch, 2019, p. 265).

Bangladesh Muslim League- BML, has had precious little activism or impact on Bangladesh's political world in the last decade.

TF came into existence in 2005, towards the end of the BNP-JI government. At that time, the founder of TF, Najibul Bashar Maizbhandari, held the lofty position of International Affairs Secretary in the BNP. Najibul Bashar had also been elected to parliament in 1991 under the AL banner but had joined the BNP in 1995. This explication is relevant because the TF is by Riaz & Raji's taxonomy a Pir/Mazar based party (Riaz & Raji, 2011, p. 48). The TF has no *sharia*-based inclination and has not been seen to be vocal in the last decade for any specific piece of policy, on which we could find a consensus-based approach, also a consensus outcome can only be deemed legitimate if the consensus reached was the “object of free and reasoned agreement among equals” (Cohen, 1989, p. 22), which in the case of TF and AL the equality is automatically obviated. The timing of TF's coalition formation, or the founding leader's party jumping also quite readily show signs of patronage seeking behavior.

## V. Conclusion

By most counts the ruling regime in Bangladesh may in 2020 be considered a hybrid regime (Riaz A., 2019), and it is in the nature of such regimes to try and coopt Islamic parties to boost their own image of legitimacy (Malik, 1986; Parmentier, 1999; Khan K., 2013; Kubicek, 2015; Sinno & Khanani, 2009). The case for Bangladesh seems no different. Of the thirteen Islamic parties that we focused on in this study, only IAB could be identified as an ideology-based party through their activities. The JI is certainly an exception, because after the loss of their registration their public actions can no longer be separated from those of the BNP, even if there is some strife there as well (Antara, 2018).

We only chose the registered parties for our study due to the proliferation of one-person vehicles masquerading as political parties in Bangladesh. In 2006 more than 100 entities claimed themselves to be Islamic parties (Riaz & Raji, 2011, p. 46), yet most of them, or more honestly, none of them have any activism footprint or any political or social impact. It is clear to see from the electoral numbers in 2018 that even many of the registered Islamic parties do not have much of an activism footprint.

By and large most of these parties do not ascribe to either the ideological or the consensus models. None of the parties in question bargained any form of compromise with the ruling regime to promulgate any specific policy nor to circumvent civil strife (Lijphart, 1999). Under Bangladesh's current regime these parties seen to have only pursued the government's patronage, through which they seek to expropriate undue rents, and the ruling regime seeks to acquire a modicum of legitimacy in exchange. This patronage cycle has not only attenuated the

effective strength of all Islamic parties, apart from the IAB, but have also made them progressively less attractive to the ruling regime because the weaker they are the less apparent legitimacy they might be able to provide. In this milieu of patronage, rent-seeking, and expropriation, it remains to be seen how long these Islamic parties can survive without changing their modus operandi.

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## Note:

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<sup>i</sup> Interview: Zaker Party, Standing Committee member, Dhaka, 04.10.2018

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid

<sup>iv</sup> Interview: Islami Andolan Bangladesh, senior adviser, Dhaka, 06.07.2019

<sup>v</sup> Interview: Bangladesh Islami Front, senior leader, Dhaka, 02.05.2019

<sup>vi</sup> Interview: Bangladesh Khilafat Andolan, senior leader, Dhaka, 23.11.2018

<sup>vii</sup> Ibid

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid

<sup>ix</sup> Interview: Bangladesh Muslim League, senior leader, Dhaka, 20.12.2018

<sup>x</sup> Ibid

<sup>xi</sup> Interview: Nizam-e-Islam, senior leader, Dhaka, 05.10.2018

<sup>xii</sup> Interview: Jamate Ulamaye Islam Bangladesh, senior leader, Dhaka, 16.11.2018

<sup>xiii</sup> Ibid