
Context of Bengali Separatist Movement: An Appraisal of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman's Leadership

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Abstract

Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman is generally credited with being a leader who founded the state of Bangladesh that came into existence in the result of a separatist movement. This paper endeavours to review his leadership status in the light of context. By answering the question if he was a secessionist it has been clarified whether he steered separatist Bengali movement to the success or other actors like circumstances, minor leaders in the party and mishandling of the competitors raised him to the position for which he neither planned nor worked. Exploring the flow of events regarding separatism in East Pakistan spread over the span of more than twenty-four years the role of Sheikh Mujib as the leader of secessionist movement has been observed. This paper tries to examine the impacts of his qualities of oratory and organisation on the separatism in East Pakistan. It looks as if he gave the popularity and programme to the Bengali Movement or it was vice versa. The discussion moves to the outcome that as principal leader of the Movement he was not in charge for its mission-visualisation, formulation of course of action and ultimately success of the goal.

Leadership is defined as the "relation between an individual and a group built around some common interest and behaving in a manner directed by him."¹ Philip Selznick states that Leadership "is a kind of work done to meet the needs of a social situation."² Herbert G. Hicks and C. R. Gullett identify that leadership is the "ability to influence the behaviour of others in a particular direction."³ The concept of leadership presupposes the ability or capacity of a person (leader) to influence the behaviour of others (followers) in a specific situational context to achieve the commonly desired objectives. The concept of political leadership refers to a specialised role in terms of both aspiration for and exercise of power through either governmental or non-governmental structures.⁴

After investigation of some commonalities in these definitions leadership is perceived as "some kind of process, act, or influence that in some way gets people to do something."⁵ There is difference in their connotation i.e. how leaders get people to do things (impress, organise, influence, and inspire) and how what is to be done is decided forced obedience or involuntary consent, determined by leaders as a reflection of mutual purposes. Obviously, leadership is a process of motivating and influencing others, even though the means and ends may vary from one society to another. In general, quality of a leader can be determined by the extent to which it possesses the attributes- vision, foresight, knowledge/skill, stamina, integrity, values, sensitivity, decisiveness, discipline, responsiveness, responsibility and finally capacity to respond appropriately to challenges.⁶

Theorist of situational leadership theory like Murphy and Stogdill noted that situations in which people find themselves create needs, and it is the nature of these needs that defines the type of leadership that best serves the group.⁷ Situation leadership theory proceeds from the assumption that different situations call for different characteristics. No single optimal psychographic profile of a leader exists.⁸

In East Pakistan during the early quarter of Pakistan's existence the context was composed of the objective problems of

integration and development of the Bengali Movement that had been commenced since the emergence of Pakistan. For a political leader whose constituency was East Pakistan there were two opposite courses of action. First was to appease the boiling separatism and strengthening Pakistan. In this course the leader was to deal the situation and followers in facing this situation. Adopting this course the leader's activity would cover three interlocking phases. First, there would be a diagnostic function. Leader was expected to diagnose group situation (the disease to the state of Pakistan) authoritatively, wisely and in good time. Second, he must have formulated or prescribed a policy, i.e., a course of group action or action on the group's behalf that would resolve the problem-situation and would free Pakistan from the menace of separatism. Third, leader had a mobilizing function. Leader must have gained the group's support, or predominant support, for the definition of the group situation that he had advanced and for the plan of action that he had prescribed for the safety and security of Pakistan.⁹

Second course of action for a leader whose constituency was in East Pakistan was the advocacy of the movement leading towards the breakup of Pakistan that really happened and Sheikh Mujib was given credit for this. In this course of action one must expect from the leader to execute the functions of diagnosis, policy-formulating and policy-implementing¹⁰ for the achievement of the goal of the separatist movement. The leader in this course of action is expected first of all to diagnose the problems of the people of East Pakistan. Secondly he must have formulated an obvious course of action and way out for the march towards the resolution of people's problem and in the given situation it must have been the visualisation of the separate state for Bengalis. Thirdly he must have mobilized, and advanced the group towards the direction he had visualised. In this instance the leader would have mobilized the separatist movement to its final goal of secession.

In order to assess any leader from East Pakistan during first quarter of Pakistan two different angles can be used for a review;

leader of united Pakistan or leader of Bengali separatist movement. In case he would be leader of united Pakistan he would be working for the integrity of the state and on the other side if he would be the leader of Bengali separatist movement he would have been working for the development of separatist Bengali nationalism that might lead to the separate state for Bengalis. As these two types are altogether opposite one must fit in any one of these categories. The conflict in the leader or his opposing actions and decisions would mark that he was a politician but not a political leader. While complete attachment with any one side may rise opposition for him in other camp but would raise him to the standard of a leader.

Grey-haired, stocky and tall for a Bengali the bespectacled Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman studied liberal Arts and Law, two different disciplines. Except for a brief stint as an insurance salesman, he devoted most of his time to politics.¹¹ He became the Bengali politician as he played important role for Language Agitation in 1948 and was arrested on 11 March 1948. He was elected as the Secretary General of East Pakistan Awami League (AL) in 1953 and was elected member of East Pakistan Assembly as United Front (UF) candidate and appointed as the provincial minister of social welfare and agriculture but soon resigned. In 1955 he was elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly and remained the Minister for Labour and Anti-Corruption from 1956-57 for a short period where he was not free of allegations of corruption. He remained imprisoned from 1958-59 for a year and a half and then in 1959-61, he reorganized the AL in 1963.¹² The position taken by him and his biographers after the creation of Bangladesh has proved to an extent that he did not lead the efforts for the preservation of Pakistan.

Organisation of Awami League, the party that claimed to achieve the separate Bengali state ultimately, is one such contribution of Sheikh Mujib that can mark him as a leader of the Bengali Movement. Until the death of H. S. Suhrawardy, Sheikh Mujib remained an organizational man for which talent the former often spoke warmly in latter's praise. These organizational skills

helped Sheikh Mujib to organize the AL and make the people follow it in the later period when his alteration to the leader of masses came due to a vacuum of leadership in AL, with the failure of Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan in establishment of national image of party, and feeling the AL slipping in popularity he decided to lead the party and popularized it in East Pakistan on the ground of regional demands notably the Six Points. In that period, having roots in the countryside seeming the successor of Fazlul Huq than the urbane Suhrawardy, he became a haranguer of the crowds at public meetings with plenty of appeal to the emotions and with an undertone of violence.¹³ Due to his organizational expertise it was very easy for Sheikh Mujib to transform the AL the most effective and active political party in the East Pakistan after 1969.¹⁴

Second contribution of Sheikh Mujib for Separatist Movement that could be counted was his skill of delivering rousing speeches. During the campaign of 1970 election he got a chance to demonstrate speaking qualities. He campaigned incessantly from March 1969 to December 1970, covering 55 cities, all district headquarters and sub-divisional towns and about 400 *thana* (administrative area under a police station). Thus a rough estimate would suggest that he addressed over 300 million people during this stretch of campaign.¹⁵ He by virtue of his fiery oratory convinced the poverty-stricken people that they had been exploited by West Pakistan, and now it was the last chance that they could use the force of their majority.¹⁶ However these speeches did not call people towards direct goal of separate state for Bengalis. They called for the success in the elections and for achievement of government. G. W. Choudhury remarks that

Sheikh Mujib adopted a deceptive strategy to achieve his goal of dismembering Pakistan. He appealed to the Muslim voters in the 1970 elections on the issue of regional autonomy for the Bengalis and made repeated pledges that he would never break up Pakistan or oppose a constitution based on Islamic principles or ideology. It was not until...March 25-26, 1971, that the Bengali Muslims were ever told by Mujib or nay of his colleagues of their ultimate goal. He presented to the Bengali Muslims a subtle and

veiled scheme of secession under the grab of regional autonomy.¹⁷

Six Point Programme can be taken as Sheikh Mujib's contribution in visualisation of the basic goal of Bengali Movement. It was not his creation¹⁸ alone. To Chaudhuri Muhammad Ali certain Government officials can be included among its authors as it was a conspiracy to create differences in opposition of President Ayub Khan.¹⁹ Mazari reveals it had originally been drafted by a number of Bengali intellectuals - a certain Dr. Muzaffar Chaudhry is said to have played an important role.²⁰ Before 1966, Rehman Subhan and some other Bengali economists had expressed its ideas.²¹ Sheikh Mujib just seized upon it seeing in it a crystallization of what he wanted but had not been able to enunciate so precisely.²²

Even Sheikh Mujib did not realize the full implications of six points or else he had some other plans in his mind. In 1971, Zafarullah Khan; after a meeting with Sheikh Mujib recorded that he could not answer many questions relating to the Six Points. When asked whether financing the Federal Centre with contributions from the provinces was realistic or feasible, he had no answer.²³ Six Points were not formula of secession. Mujib categorically and repeatedly stated that the formula was negotiable and amendable. However his stand gradually became rigid and uncompromising after the elections²⁴ because his rise to fame was so closely interwoven with his Six Points that it was difficult for him to reject or amend them.²⁵

The popularity of Sheikh Mujib helped a lot in popularising of Bengali Movement as well as in portraying him Banga Bandhu, Father of Bangladesh. However his popularity was not altogether made of his own capabilities. Mazari rightly states that he had been more favoured by circumstances rather than any outstanding leadership qualities.²⁶ Fate gave him chance in 1965 when a vacuum of political leadership appeared in East Pakistan. H. S. Suhrawardy and A. K. Fazlul Haq were dead. Nurul Amin lacked charisma. A. H. Bhashani had suffered loss of face on account of dubious role in the 1965 Presidential Elections. Due to political vacuum and dictatorial rule, a sense of frustration prevailed in the

country. The people looked a leader who could challenge Ayub's authority.²⁷ These were the days when Sheikh Mujib came into limelight.

The follies of ruling politicians of Pakistan also helped Sheikh Mujib to become popular. The ruthless suppression of the Bengali Movement by the Ayub-regime and Sheikh Mujib's arrest gave him the halo of martyrdom. Throughout 1966-1968 while he was in prison, his popularity increased. The Agartala Conspiracy Case,²⁸ instead of destroying his support, helped to build it by magnifying his role as the champion of Bengali rights.²⁹ Then he got undue support during Gen. Yahya Khan regime who adopted a placating attitude towards him visualizing him as the prospective Prime Minister of Pakistan. The East Pakistan government also gave him undue importance. From a small government functionary to a senior bureaucrat, everyone tried to get closer to him and provided him with every secret as a proof of his loyalties. The Bengali bureaucrats took decisions with his approval. Even Governor Ahsan's attitude towards him was one of indulgence as President Yahya Khan "devoted most attention to him" and he became the Prime Minister of the 'invisible Government of Pakistan'.³⁰

The size of Sheikh Mujib's constituency expanded enormously when he began to project the interests of Bengalis. Therefore his main drawback as a leader of Pakistan was that he was essentially a provincial politician with few interests aside from his primary aim as a politician of East Pakistan – the betterment of the people of East Pakistan.³¹ This flaw in him gave him little chance to think in all Pakistan terms. It is also said that in this respect he was unprincipled and ambitious enough that he tried to cash in on emotional feelings in the East Pakistan against the West.³² He, in launching the Six Points, appears to have made up his mind to give up his West Pakistani constituency and maximize his support in East Pakistan.³³

The Bengali Movement succeeded not because of Sheikh Mujib's leadership but due to the factors of 24 years' boiling frustration from suppression in the masses and impotence of

Pakistani leadership in tackling the Bengali Movement. An analysis of Sheikh Mujib's speeches would reveal that his tone assumed threatening posture as if he had a definite plan in his mind³⁴ but in the latter days he proved indecisive. Syed Shabbir Hussain, in a meeting with him on 27 February 1971, felt that he was torn by a conflict in his mind. "To be or not to be is the rub"; to work for an independent Bangladesh or to have one Pakistan; and if independent Bangladesh what methods to use, armed uprising or constitutional framework.³⁵

Sheikh Mujib cannot be accepted the influential leader of Bengali Movement in its last phases as at that time he was more helpless than any principal leader not only of Bengali Movement but also of Pakistan. In the circumstances after the postponement of the Assembly session in March 1971 he lost control over his party and Pro-Moscow and Pro-Indian group took hold of the affairs. Though apparently by the evening of March 7, 1971, he had successfully contained all pressures from the extremists yet he had never been the master of his own party. At that juncture he was more swayed by the people than actually leading them. The circumstances dictated terms and the he was simply endorsing them.³⁶

Notwithstanding Hasan Zaheer feels difficult to imagine a mass leader of Sheikh Mujib's standing and political experience as a helpless man because he himself expressed extreme views during his election speeches,³⁷ Rounaq Jahan while comparing three important leaders – Sheikh Mujib, Yahya Khan and Z. A. Bhutto – maintains that they had different constituencies with divergent and potentially conflictive interests. Of the three, Yahya Khan and Z. A. Bhutto stood above their constituencies and Sheikh Mujib had some built-in constraints.³⁸ Mujib's sweeping victory placed him in a position of greater strength but it also limited his room for manoeuvre and his inclination to compromise. Extreme leftist like Bhashani pressed him to strike out for independence rather than autonomy.³⁹

At the time of the negotiations among Government, PPP and AL after elections in January-March 1971 Sheikh Mujib did not act

free of the context, his followers and his constituency. Neither he could make compromise as leader of united Pakistan nor he could lead the situation in favour of Bengali Movement. He was more endangered than the other two principal leaders – Yahya Khan and Z. A. Bhutto. Ultimately he was less responsible for the outcome of talks. It was hard for him even sitting in talks negating the views of other major Bengali leaders. Abdul Mansur advocated 'dual Centre' to enable the people of the two regions "to equally exercise their sovereignty sitting on their own soil". A. R. Khan issued a note of warning saying that the time of forming a federation had been left behind and that except by "the full implementation of the Lahore Resolution no other formula can resolve the constitutional crisis". These statements encouraged secessionists and made Sheikh Mujib's position difficult.⁴⁰The hidden pressure on Mujib was discovered later.

Being a secessionist meant for Sheikh Mujib that he was true leader of secessionist Bengali Movement but his status of being secessionist always remained clouded in his negation of it. It was often alleged that Sheikh Mujib was a secessionist, the allegation that he always denied. Syed Abu-ul-Ala Moududi, the Chief of Jamaat-i-Islami, believed in 1967 that Sheikh Mujib's extreme group of the AL really wanted secession.⁴¹This contemplation was supported by the verdict of court that unanimously found him guilty of charges of conspiracy with Pakistan and sentenced him to death.⁴²A section of AL headed by Abdus Salam Khan realised secessionist intentions of Sheikh Mujib and dissociated itself from the party.⁴³

Sheikh Mujib boasted afterwards that he had been working for the establishment of Bangladesh for some time.⁴⁴In a public address at the Ramna Race Course in Dhaka on 10th January 1972, he thundered: "I had been working for this independence for the last twenty-five years. Now my dream had come true."⁴⁵ Likewise talking to US ambassadors in June 1970 he threatened that if the army, civil service, and "vested interest" continued to play this game, "I will proclaim independence and call for guerrilla action if the army tries to stop me."⁴⁶

On the contrary to such claims Sheikh Mujib never wanted an independent Bangladesh. Conversely his demand was autonomy for East Pakistan on the basis of his Six Points.⁴⁷ No doubt he was committed to the Bengali Movement and the goal of autonomy for that movement. He even in 1957 appeared confusing, supporting Suhrawardy on one hand and idea of autonomy on other, when he on autonomy motion in East Pakistan Assembly said that people wanted 'economic autonomy' and not 'political autonomy.'⁴⁸

Sheikh Mujib, in a meeting with President Ayub, demanded the right of self-determination for East Pakistan and asked for complete autonomy on the basis of the Lahore Resolution. On the question how East Pakistan would get foreign aid, he quoted the Australian constitution under which every federating state could negotiate independently for foreign aid.⁴⁹ For him if independence was a goal but it was the last option. Even in the early months of 1971 answering a question whether the Six Points meant independence, Mujib replied, "Independence? No, not yet."⁵⁰ His involvement in the Agartala Conspiracy was political and not finally proved. Mujib had links with Indian government as his party was pro-India and he was launching the Movement successfully for autonomy.

Sheikh Mujib was neither working for secession in Round Table Conference (RTC) 1969⁵¹ nor he contributed for failure of RTC and imposition of Martial Law as was widely felt throughout the country.⁵² The assumption that he facilitated the Army's plans for resumption of military rule through his hasty pronouncement on return to Dhaka immediately after the RTC, that nothing like reversion to parliamentary government and direct universal suffrage less than autonomy based on Six Points must be conceded⁵³ does not correctly observe his posture. In fact he was not dealt politically by President Yahya and President Ayub both. Though, in the secret meeting with President Ayub during RTC, he refused the offer of becoming nominated Prime Minister in order to face elections which would have strengthened his position yet he promised to present a constitutional scheme which would incorporate the Six Points within the framework of one Pakistan.

He even assured Ayub that the scheme would be established on 1962 Constitution.⁵⁴ He thought that he could achieve provincial autonomy within a united Pakistan. He tried to gain more from Ayub through pressure tactics as Yahya during a secret meeting had assured him that Martial Law would not be enforced. He was cheated and Martial Law was imposed. He was disappointed on the failure of achievement of autonomy as well as government.⁵⁵

Before and during election period it was generally believed, even in the estimate of the UKHC, that if he emerged as leader of the largest party in Pakistan after the elections, he would compromise with the Military regime in spite of his desire for more autonomy and would work towards an agreed constitution for Pakistan.⁵⁶ During election campaign whenever the people used to ask him whether he was for the separation of the two wings he would put his hands on the Holy Quran and say, "I do not want separation."⁵⁷ Even after the election his motive was not to get full separation. His objective was getting power and full autonomy in order to appease his separatist and extremist supporters.

Apart from an indirect hint on 7th March 1971, Sheikh Mujib never said anything nor took any position against the territorial integrity of Pakistan between 3rd January and 25th March 1971. Only exception was his emergency meeting with Yahya Khan, on 21st March 1971.⁵⁸ On the contrary he declared at a public meeting in Dhaka on December 3, 1970 that "future constitution will be framed in cooperation with the elected representatives of West Pakistan, but within the broad framework of Six Points' programme."⁵⁹ He had declared on November 5, 1970 that he was leading struggle against exploiters, but not West Pakistanis.⁶⁰ In Dalim's words he, on 28th February, stunned the people of whole of East Pakistan when he declared, "Six-point will not be imposed on anyone."⁶¹ US Consulate also presumed on March 4, 1971 that he "would still prefer to retain some connection, however tenuous, with the West. He could be driven by circumstances to declare independence, but he may be able to find a halfway house in a formulation which is not new but is now being revived."⁶²

After the 1970's elections Sheikh Mujib's activities were focused on efforts to get the co-operation of the smaller parties of West Pakistan and independent MNAs through Yousaf Haroon. These moves were designed "to belittle Bhutto as much as possible"⁶³ His successful policy was to ignore the big party of West Pakistan and win over the support of the minor parties. In Akbar Bugti's opinion, he was extremely conciliatory towards West Pakistani politicians in general (of course with the exception of Bhutto). Akbar Bugti was extremely satisfied with his expressed commitment to uphold the concept of provincial autonomy for the minority provinces in Pakistan.⁶⁴ He only became furious on March 2, 1971 when he came to know that power was not being transferred to him. When he suggested every Bengali 'not to cooperate with those who are against handing over of power and instead do everything in their power to foil the conspiracy against Bangladesh' it was the first time that he had called East Pakistan, Bangladesh.⁶⁵

In asking the military government to agree to an immediate transfer of power to the assembly he was encouraged by numerous West Pakistan leaders including Qayyum Khan of the Muslim League and other figures such as Air Marshal Asghar Khan, Nasrullah and Mian Mumtaz Daultana. So he thought that his call for an immediate end of martial law and hand over of power to the assembly would be backed by the West Pakistanis as well. He did not count on Bhutto only because he accused Bhutto of having caused the postponement of the assembly, and when a fresh date was given by the President, he was no longer interested in constitutional niceties alone. He wanted power there and then.⁶⁶

Jl believed if the power was transferred to AL in the light of elections and the meeting of Assembly would be held in Dhaka, the acceptable constitution could be framed despite the insistence of Mujib on 6 points. AL would never adopt the way of separation. Khan Abdul Wali Khan states that when he was called to UK to talk to Mujib he asked him directly "Tell me clearly if you want separation from us," Mujib felt as if had been abused and

answered: "Khan Sahib, you do not know I am a Muslim Leaguer." That clearly meant that he was one of the builders and not destroyers of Pakistan.⁶⁷

Dalim views that Mujib stood for the unity of Pakistan while he wanted to use exploitation slogan as a vehicle to win the elections. He under pressure and having committed with Americans could not go against the unity of Pakistan. The talks of Sheikh Kamal with Dalim also testify that Mujib had no doubt at all about the transfer of power, and was not planning anything unlawful. Sheikh Kamal emphasized the ensuing discussion that was supposed to be held between the President and Sheikh Mujib. It was also clear that Mujib along with other leaders of AL was prepared to resolve the question of the Six Points through negotiations to facilitate transfer of power in a similar way as was done in the case of elections. Sheikh Kamal told that Mujib was not a conspirator. He believed in rectifying regional disparity and establishing Provincial self determination.⁶⁸ In meetings with Asghar Khan also, Mujib said that he was a Pakistani and had played a part in the Pakistan Movement. When Asghar Khan asked him why he had not accepted Yahya's invitation, he said that he had been busy with the draft of the constitution, and, moreover, the atmosphere had been fouled so much that his people would not agree to his going there now.⁶⁹

The chief hurdle in declaring Sheikh Mujib as the leader of Bengali separatist movement is that he remained autonomist and not secessionist since 1947 until the army action in March 1971. He raised and developed the Bengali Movement in order to achieve the autonomy within Pakistan. He, unlike other secessionists and freedom fighters in the history, did not set a clear goal and idea of freedom for his followers.

Sheikh Mujib was not leading the context at the critical times also. On the other hand the context and followers were steering his grudging actions towards what he had not planned or thought. For secession he was under great pressure from the extremists, including Professor Muzaffar and A. H. Bhashani. The former demanded the right of secession for nationalities and Bhashani

demanded independence for East Pakistan and he interpreted the vote for the AL as a vote for independence.⁷⁰ Even in last week of November 1971 Pakistani High Commission reported to the British Prime Minister that an AL contact had told him that extremists were taking upper hand while Sheikh Mujib and majority of AL leaders were not for secession.⁷¹

Sheikh Mujib had lost the command over hawks in his party. It appeared as on 3rd March 1971, the four student leaders "A.S.M. Abdur Rab, Shahjahan Siraj, Abdul Quddus Makhani and Noor Alam Siddiky were pressing Sheikh Mujib to declare independence."⁷² The description of Gen. Rao Farman and Shaukat Hayat maintains that the party of Mujib especially the student leaders were out of control of Mujib and they including Tajuddin kept an eye on his meetings while he was willing to save Pakistan in case he could get something from Pakistani rulers to satisfy the extremists in his party and East Pakistan.⁷³ Various organs of AL observed 23 March 1971 as a "Resistance Day" in East Pakistan but it is controversial whether it was under the directions of Sheikh Mujib or he was a prisoner of the popular line taken by different extremist factions of the party.

Government official point of view is that the flag of Bangladesh was unfurled on his residence. He, while waving the Bangladesh flag, said "the struggle is for emancipation and for freedom." In a ceremony to unfurl the flag of Bangladesh on the office of *The People*, a political organ of the AL, was arranged and he willingly took the salute under the shadow of the Bangladesh flag on which it was inscribed in bold words: "A new country has emerged today". The map of Bangladesh was also engraved on the iron gate of Mujib's residence in Dhan Mandi.⁷⁴

But the version of Bengali writers is contradictory. Bhuiyan maintains that when a student rally went to Sheikh Mujib's residence and gave him a flag for hoisting it, he hesitated in presence of many journalists, including some foreign journalists. "Then, on behalf of the rally, A. S. M. Abdur Rab, quite forcibly put the flag in the hands of the Sheikh and requested him to raise the flag. At this point, the Sheikh had to raise the flag much

against his will. The Chattra Sangram Parishad (Students' Action Committee) requested Sheikh Mujib to raise the flag first at his own residence and reluctantly, the Sheikh raised the flag.⁷⁵

During the period of insurgency from March to December 1971 Sheikh Mujib did not lead the practical fighting and preferred courting easy arrest to organization of resistance. He also did not feel better to be underground in order to lead the Bengali Movement practically. There is controversy over his willingness for the declaration of independence after military action. After the creation of Bangladesh Mujib falsely claimed that it was he who declared the independence and proclaimed to be the sole standard-bearer of the liberation war.⁷⁶ Some say that he readily agreed when Sirajul Alam Khan along with some other student leaders urged him to issue a declaration of independence on his behalf and call upon the East Bengal Rifles (EBR) East Pakistan Rifles (EPR), police and ansars to resist the Pakistan army. He also dictated to a friend in the Central Telegraph Office the short message of the effect to resist and to prepare for a war of independence. But he decided to stay at home and wait for the events to unfold themselves.⁷⁷

Conclusion

The outcome of the assessment of the status of Sheikh Mujibur-Rehman as the political leader is that neither could he lead the separatist movement nor he preserved the state of Pakistan. He remained in between the two. The motive of his organisation of AL and speaking capacity were achievements as politician. These capacities were not directed towards the goal of secession that is main reason of claims for his leadership status. He did not envision the mission as well as goal of secession for Bengali movement and it was not he who formulated or moulded the context. On the other hand context made him do what was credited to him. Sometimes he saw the context and got benefit from it. Such endeavours of his were also fewer. Sometimes context handed him over the success when he did nothing or even had no idea for it.

Notes and References

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- 1 *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, s.v. "Leadership," 258-284. For elaboration see *International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, 'Leadership', 101-105; quoted in Surendra Nath Kaushik, *Pakistan under Bhutto's Leadership* (New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House, 1985), 4.
 - 2 Philip Selznick, *Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), 22; quoted in Kaushik, *Pakistan under Bhutto's Leadership*, 4.
 - 3 Herbert G. Hicks and C. R. Gullett, *The Management of Organizations* (Tokyo: Kogakusa, 1972), 446; quoted in Kaushik, *Pakistan under Bhutto's Leadership*, 4.
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 - 8 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leadership>, 03 February 2008.
 - 9 Tucker, *Political Culture*, 13.
 - 10 Tucker, *Political Culture*, 13.
 - 11 Saleem, *Blood Beaten Track*, 126.

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- 12 Zahid, "Saqoot-i-Mashraqi Pakistan," 40-42.
 - 13 Baxter and others, *Government and Politics*, 250; Feldman, *From Crisis to Crisis*, 191; Rounaq Jahan, *Bangladesh Politics*, 28; and Saleem, *Blood Beaten Track*, 163-164.
 - 14 For details see Humayun, *Sheikh Mujib's 6-Point*, 301.
 - 15 Maniruzzaman, *Bangladesh Revolution*, 75.
 - 16 Safdar Mhamood, *Pakistan Divided*, 80.
 - 17 Choudhury, *Last Days*, 4-5.
 - 18 Mazari, *Journey to Disillusionment*, 178.
 - 19 Salahuddin Khan, *Task before Us*, 286.
 - 20 Mazari, *Journey to Disillusionment*, 187; and Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan Divided*, 66.
 - 21 Mian Kifait Ali, *Pakistan vs Bangla Desh* (Lahore: The Author, 1971), 43.
 - 22 Feldman, *From Crisis to Crisis*, 192.
 - 23 Safdar Mhamood, *Pakistan Divided*, 68.
 - 24 Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan Divided*, 64 and 71.
 - 25 Rounaq Jahan, *Bangladesh Politics*, 30.
 - 26 Mazari, *Journey to Disillusionment*, 165.
 - 27 Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan Divided*, 43.
 - 28 In the end of 1967 a conspiracy for the secession of East Pakistan was hatched with the help of India. For the trial of conspirators the Government arrested twenty-eight persons who were allegedly concerting to bring about the secession of East Pakistan. They were said to be in touch with Indian officials to secure arms and funds to promote their plan for secession. The most notable among the arrested was Sheikh Mujib, the leader of AL. The proceedings of the case helped in rejuvenating the nativistic feelings of the Bengalis. The sufferings of the Bengalis, their deprivations, exploitations and injustices

constituted the central theme of the proceedings. With each new statement from the accused the resentment of the people began to be expressed with greater force and at the end the demands for release of conspirators including Sheikh Mujib and for the end of the trial gathered many huge processions against the government.

- 29 Rounaq Jahan, *Bangladesh Politics*, 29.
- 30 Safdar Mhamood, *Pakistan Divided*, 58.
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- 37 Hasan Zaheer, *Separation*, 126-127.
- 38 Rounaq Jahan, *Bangladesh Politics*, 32.
- 39 Barnds, "Pakistan's Disintegration," 322.
- 40 Safdar Mhamood, *Pakistan Divided*, 98-99.
- 41 Barrington, UKHC Pakistan, Minute on Syed Maududi, 13 September 1967, DO 134/34, TNA London.
- 42 Saleem, *Blood Beaten Track*, 61-62.
- 43 Safdar Mhamood, *Pakistan Divided*, 58.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 10.
- 45 Outbuddin Aziz, *Mission to Washington*, (Karachi: Publications Division of United Press of Pakistan, 1973), 4.

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- 46 US Consulate Dhaka to Secretary of State Washington, Telegram, June 70, *American Papers*, comp. Roedad Khan, 367.
 - 47 Dalim, *Bangladesh Untold Facts*, 9, This point was supported by Indian Foreign Minister's statement, Note of UK PM meeting with Swaran Singh on 21 June 1971, PREM 15/569, TNA London.
 - 48 Zarina Salamat, *Pakistan 1947-58*, 91.
 - 49 Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan Divided*, 43.
 - 50 Shabbir Hussain, *Ayub, Bhutto and Zia*, 142.
 - 51 When the Military regime of Ayub was crumbling he called in leaders of the country to join their heads in RTC on 26 February 1969 in order to solve the issues confronted to the country; the most important and main of the difficult ones was the relationship between the two wings of the country. The RTC was held briefly on February 26 adjourned to reassemble on March 10 and ended on March 13 without any positive outcome.
 - 52 Zahid, "Saqoot-i-Mashraqi Pakistan," 63.
 - 53 Feldman, *End & Beginning*, 29.
 - 54 Moudud Ahmed, *Bangladesh: Constitutional Quest*, 150.
 - 55 Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan Divided*, 53.
 - 56 Annexure to Situation Report by East Pakistan Relief Unit FCO, 2 December 1970, PREM 15/565, TNA London.
 - 57 Matinuddin, *Tragedy of Errors*, 142.
 - 58 Dalim, *Bangladesh Untold Facts*, 91.
 - 59 Shabbir Hussain, *Ayub, Bhutto and Zia*, 143.
 - 60 Mirza, *East Pakistan Crisis*, 5.
 - 61 Dalim, *Bangladesh Untold Facts*, 88.

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- 62 US Department of State, "East Pakistan Situation Moves Toward Climax," 4 March 1971, *American Papers*, comp. Roedad Khan, 501.
 - 63 Safdar Mhamood, *Pakistan Divided*, 96.
 - 64 Mazari, *Journey to Disillusionment*, 186.
 - 65 Matinuddin, *Tragedy of Errors*, 182.
 - 66 Saleem, *Blood Beaten Track*, 130-131.
 - 67 Malik, *Tufail Nama*, 140.
 - 68 Dalim, *Bangladesh Untold Facts*, 70 and 94-95.
 - 69 Asghar Khan, *We've Learnt*, 37.
 - 70 *Pakistan Observer*, 10 December 1970 quoted in Safdar Mhamood, *Pakistan Divided*, 129.
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 - 72 Imam, *Of Blood*, 13-14.
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 - 75 Bhuiyan, *Emergence of Bangladesh*, 181.
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 - 77 Saleem, *Blood Beaten Track*, 29 and 31.