INTRODUCTION
Introduction

The problems: Just after the medieval era in the 16th century Machiavelli, the father of modern political thought, gave the concept of nationalism. Side by side renaissance brought the freedom of individuality i.e. the confidence of autonomous individuality. Following this path in the post-French revolution period the nationalist state thought was flourished. In the interest of nationalist states at this time liberalism and democratic thought also came together grasping each other’s hands. Democracy provides the right to the people to elect their head of the state. In this electioneering process the political party system is must. In both of the democratic and authoritarian system of the modern state concept there is difference in the role of the political parties but in both of the governing system political parties occupy very important positions.

Many countries of the world got independence from colonialist rulers through discussion and mutual understanding. But unlike those the situation of Bangladesh was different. Bangladesh had to achieve the freedom through a bloody liberation struggle. In the post liberation struggle of Bangladesh the communication system was destroyed, the trade and industry was shattered. The law and order situation also collapsed. The national and international anti-liberation forces were vindictive. There was scarcity of food. To overcome this national crisis there was the need of strong unity/solidarity in the then single dominant governing party Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) leadership. But the practical problems arising out of factionalism and splits in Awami League, in this period of national crisis, created a crisis in providing an effective government. As a result in the one hand this disorderly and unstable situation played an important role in the changing over of political power in 1975 through a bloody military coup. On the other hand the other political parties, already became weak due to factionalism and split and could not play any decisive role to avoid this adverse consequence. As a result in the next 25 years the country had to suffer the autocratic rule of the military regimes; the people were deprived of the democratic rights. Till the last of 1990 the country could not escape itself from the tyranny of the military regime, as the political parties could not give proper leadership to the people for a successful democratic movement. One of the main reasons of the failure of the major opposition parties to give leadership to a successful anti-military regime movement to establish democracy was that they were drenched in internal infightings and splits. Even in the post 1990 period the governments led by AL and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) also experienced the lack of effective governance due to the factionalism in their party folds.

The history of political parties in the country has been that of their formation, split and reformation. There is uncountable numbers of political parties in Bangladesh. BAL, BNP, Jatia Party (JP), Jammat e Islami (JI) are the prominent among them. The methods of the formation of the political parties in this country are different from the thinking of modern democratic states. Here in the formation of the political parties there is little presence of theoretical framework. Many parties don not have constitution and manifesto. In developed countries as parties are well organized and consensus on value system always prevails, factional disputes are usually settled within the party. The party system of UK and USA are the best examples. Even in the socialist countries, where the production relations are socialistic and there is the principle of ‘democratic centralism’ within the party structure, factionalism does occur but the party has its own mechanism to minimize its impact. But unlike the developed countries Bangladesh ‘faction management’ is rather unusual. Here factional disputes often led to party splits and the formation of separate parties. The result is that most of the groups calling themselves political parties are not well-knitted and organized.
up to the grassroots level. The main problems in the political development of the country are
the internal party factionalism, lack of tolerance of the parties towards each other, the unjust
military interference in politics, the emergence of uncountable number of small political
parties and lack of political consciousness among the masses. All the parties are more or less
devoured with factional conflicts. Due to the intra-party conflicts day-by-day mass-based and
influential political parties lost their dynamism or became inactive. Many former mass-based
and powerful political parties like NAP and CPB became obsolete. In the place of few strong
mass-based political parties the mushroom growth of many personality-based political parties
took place – which don’t have any support base in the masses. These parties only divided the
public opinion into several fractions. It manifested the unprecedented degree of factionalism
in Bangladesh. Today there is hardly any political party in Bangladesh, which has not been
affected by feud and factionalism. This phenomenon has led to a continuing instability in the
politics of Bangladesh. As a result, even after thirty years of independence, Bangladesh is
facing hurdles in giving institutional shape to democracy; the country is lagging far behind to
provide a stable party system – which is the cherished dream of the people. Political
development and establishment of democracy depends on the establishment of strong party
system and few well-organized political parties in a country. The socio-economic
development of a country mostly depends on political development and proper growth of
democracy in a country. As due to the intra-party and inter-party conflict, proper political
development could not take place in Bangladesh because of this the socio-economic
development of the country is also hindered – still maximum people of the country are living
below poverty level. Thus understanding the pattern of factionalism is vital for critical
appraisal for the political process and political development in the country. Unlike the parties
of the modern states as Bangladesh is not the unique example of faction-ridden politics, the
nature and sources of factionalism needed to be understood in her own context.

These problems deserve careful study by the political theorists. The cause of conflicts,
historical perspectives of factionalism, documental evidence of the political parties successes
and failures through time and finally its potentials of their stability in future with and without
factionalism have to be studied and findings drawn. The results of the study shall give a scope
for the policy makers in the political parties to formulate future mitigation plans if they have
to live with factionalism. Since it is not possible now- a-days to avoid factionalism completely
due to the differences of opinion regarding policy, principle, international relations,
regionalism etc, cause of factionalism on the surface need to be discovered. But the deep roots
of factionalism, if any have to be identified.

The reasons of selecting AL for the study: The most significant development in the East
Pakistan was the emergence of the AL party and it’s espousing of Bengali nationalism, which
led the way to the independence of Bangladesh. In the Bangladesh political arena, the party
also played a dominant role to establish the people’s right. In different times engaged in anti-
autocratic movement to establish democratic right. With the popular mandate it governed the
country for two terms. After the formation of AL, like all other mass-based political parties, it
was organized with branches and ancillary bodies. Even now it maintains its strong
organizing base throughout the country. Unity in diversity is the beauty of mass-based
political parties. The AL developed as a broad- based political party with diverse elements
joining hands together ostensibly for serving the national cause. Due to the heterogeneous
characteristics of its leadership and workers group and other different reasons the party in it’s
over 50 year bumpy journey along the rough terrain of Bangladesh politics has suffered
factional conflict and splits repeatedly. No other party in Bangladesh suffered as much splits
as AL. Even then its inner conflict among the leaders and workers did not frustrate the higher political objective of offering the best leadership in the country. Still AL remained the most dynamic party having most experienced and talented leaders in its party fold. Its sheer capacity to survive historical difficulties and jump back to the centre stage is what makes the party significant. Now in Bangladesh it is the oldest and largest dominant political party. There is no such party in Bangladesh, which does have glorious history in realizing people’s right. The case study of AL can provide excellent example/ empathy of the party factionalism of Bangladesh.

This study carries an importance in finding the strength and weakness of AL under factional scenario with various options of risky variables. The cause of conflicts, historical perspectives of factionalism, documentary evidence of AL’s successes and failures through time and the possibility of its stability in politics having with factionalism in its inner-body is discussed carefully in this study. The results of the study shall give a scope for the policy makers in AL to formulate future mitigation plans if they have to live with factionalism. This study will also explore an opportunities for other political parties of Bangladesh for reviewing their perspectives in the light of the recommendation of this study. This will have a great bearing on the sustainability of party politics under the peaceful domain of the young country like Bangladesh.

To know the changing characteristics of party factionalism in Bangladesh since its emergence there is a need of thorough study of factional politics. By a partial study it is not totally possible to know the reasons of intra-party factionalism of Bangladesh. The reasons working behind the selection of the period 1971 to 1997 are: (i) During 1971-83 ideology was playing a very important role in the infighting within the AL; but after the fall of socialism, ideology does not play any decisive role in the factional politics of Bangladesh. (ii) The characteristic socio-economic background etc of the party leadership of the post-independent AL and the present politicians are not the same and these things inflict in factional politics. (iii) During 1971-75 Mujib was the towering figure of AL; he was the charismatic and unchallengeable leader. After the death of Mujib the party failed to select a unanimous leader from the prominent elites. To fill the leadership vacuum though S. Hasina was made the party chief but she could not earn respects like her father. Still she is surviving on Mujib’s charisma. Naturally the characteristics of the factional conflict inside AL in these three times are different. (iv) In the independent Bangladesh for about 21 years AL was in opposition. The party was also in power for two terms during 1972-75 and 1996-2001. The factional behaviors of different groups, working in AL, when it was in power and when it was out of power were not the same. (v) During 1971 liberation war in the absence of Mujib, there was leadership conflict in AL. At that time India was playing the mediator role to reduce the differences. During 1972-75 there was conflict among the party leaders to ensure their second position after Mujib; all were busy to have the blessing of Mujib. After the death of Mujib there was uncompromising attitude among the factional leaders to resolve the differences, which introduced the hereditary leadership in AL. After taking over the party president-ship Hasina had to fight with some of the top party leaders to secure her position. To know the changing trends of factionalism, changing behavior of faction leaders of AL, a study of AL politics during 1971 to 1997 is essential. In its over 50 year bumpy journey it has suffered factional conflict and splits of different nature/ character repeatedly. The study of AL can give a precise conception on factionalism of the political parties of Bangladesh. (vi) The focus on the factionalism in AL ending with the latest information, which the researcher hopes, will serve as a ready reference on this topic.
Review of relevant literature: Political literature on the internal factionalism of the political parties in Bangladesh has been limited and specific research dissertations on the subject are almost few and far between. Political scientists and practitioners have contributed from time to time to this factional aspect of political parties in Bangladesh. For example ‘The Era of Sheikh Mujib’ and ‘Democracy and The Challenge of Development’ written by Moudud Ahmed, ‘Political Elites in Bangladesh’ of Rangalal Sen, ‘Some Memorable incidents relating to Bangabandhu sheikh Mujib and Bangladesh’ and ‘Politics and Government of Bangladesh’ written by M.A. Wajed Miah, ‘General Ziaur Rahman and The BNP’ written by Golam Hossain, ‘Politics and Political Parties of Bangladesh’ written by Amzad Hossain, ‘Bangladesh Politics: Problems and Issues’ of Rounaq Jahan and ‘The Memories of Liberation war’ written by Amir-Ul-Huq etc are worth mentioning. But the deliberations made in these literatures are not entirely on the factionalism of political parties. These have reflected on factional aspects of political parties as when the authors felt necessity in order to justify their statements.

Political literatures regarding factionalism are also available in political journals published from time to time. These publications are also not sufficiently resourceful to analyze the causes and consequences of factionalism in political parties. So the main frame of political literature comprising factional politics within the party system of the country has been more or less absent.

However Professor Abdul Wadud Bhuyan’s article “Bangladesh Politics: Internal Party Split and Factionalism” published in Indian Political Science Review has some bearing on political factionalism in Bangladesh. In this small but well disseminated literature Prof. Bhuyan has tried to analyze factionalism in the context of its origin and nature with respect of AL. He has discussed the party splits and factionalism within AL up to 1975. In doing so he has identified some personalities in AL who have not been looked upon as the determining factors causing factionalism in AL. The author might of course have his resources to make them responsible for factionalism but the analysis is given in the article is not elaborate enough to establish them as the agents of factionalism. These deserve further insights and political analysis. The other limitations of the literature have been observed as follows: (a) A critical context of factionalism in AL emerged during the war of independence in 1971; (b) The reasons for factions within student front and other front organizations of AL have been kept out of the analytical framework; (c) Limited discussions about the role of non AL agents entering into AL in bringing about factionalism; (d) Absence of analysis of characters of political personalities in AL while describing factionalism cause by those persons; (e) the analysis has been kept limited only up to 1975. A lot of reasons are there for factional politics within AL arising after 1975. The later developments of factionalism are more critical and interesting than the previous factional context; (f) Professor Bhuyan’s literature concludes with political optimism about factions but during discussions about activities of contemporary political parties (for example – CPB, NAP, BNP, BAKSAL and other factions of AL), the author has necessarily reduced this scope to the general context, composition and impacts of factionalism.

Methodology of the study: The methodology followed for the study is primarily a combination of historical and empirical methods. The researcher has consulted source material available in Bengali as well as in English. The researcher collected materials from the records in the party office and government publication. The researcher has also collected from primary source in the form of interviews of the former leaders (old and retired from active politics) and also of those who are leading the party at present. Including these the
research scholar has also undertaken interviews of prominent intellectuals and journalists of Bangladesh. Data from the secondary source also comprise of press clippings, daily and weekly newspapers, various research papers on the subject published in academic journals, books and from the biography of political leaders of the country.

Objective of the study:
1. To take cognizance of the political context of the political parties of Bangladesh.
2. To define and analyze factionalism in political parties, particularly in the AL.
3. To draw factional relationship between political stability and factionalism in the context of AL in particular and other parties in general. For the greater interest of development of politics, stabilizing democratic institutions and protecting political parties from deterioration and decay.
4. To identify the present splits in the political parties and investigate into their causes.
5. To suggest measures to mitigate or reduce factionalism to the minimum for a healthy political atmosphere in the country.

Factionalism: An Analytical Frame Work
• The Structure of Faction and Factionalism.

Factionalism in politics is a universal phenomenon. In fact they are the two sides of the same coin and one without the other cannot exist. Mao Tse-tung admitted in his speeches to the Eleventh Plenum of the 8th central committee on August 13, 1966:

"Do we have a party outside our party? I think we do and that we have factions inside the party. We used to criticize the Kuomintang, who said, no party outside the party is autocracy; no factions inside the party is nonsense. This applied to us. You may say that there are no factions in our party, but there are."

Though it is very difficult to give specific definition on faction or factional politics, the problem of factionalism has been the subject of good deal of recent theoretical treatment. Several detail research work of different political and social scientists have been recently published in shaping the meaning of factional politics. The term faction has generally been used to refer to ‘social groups’ of varying complexities characterized by opposition to other groups in a society. It has been used in a variety of contradictory ways by social scientists. We shall consider different definitions of factions and factionalism given by different social scientists to understand the meaning of factionalism in the perspectives of ‘Political Parties’. The term factional politics has generally been used by the political scientists to an internal conflict of different groups within a political organization. Here faction is used as the sub-unit of one big political organization.

Politics in Indian sub-continent generally and in Bangladesh in particular are drawn in intense intra-party factionalism. Observing this Sisson commented that, “political parties are the system of conflict and that the party is a conflict oriented institution.”

According to Harold D. Lasswell ‘faction means any constitutional group of a large unit which works for the advancement of particular persons or politics’.

Ralph W. Nicholas, an US scholar, regards factionalism as primarily a political activity or phenomenon. By ‘political activity’ he means organized conflict over public

power. Power has control over resources, whether human or material. According to him participants in political activity attempt to expand their control over resources, or if they do not, they are not engaged in political action. He again says, “factions accordingly take on characteristics of political parties: ‘progressive’ and ‘conservative’ factions purport to represent distinct interests within the public rather than the interest of their leadership. To the extent the factions become means of ‘interest articulation’, they become functionally different from one another. The taking of socially approved names by factions is often ‘window dressing’, designed to create a favorable impression in politics where parties have an established position. So long as an arena is organized by groups whose predominant characteristics is factional, I shall refer to it as having a segmentary factional political system”.

Jones defines factionalism as a collection of individuals within an organization or institution who operate together in politics long enough, or with sufficient regularly to become recognized as a discrete group.

Myron Weiner designates factions as a group with an articulated set of goals, operating within a large organization but not created by or with the approval of the party.

While describing factions in the Congress Party of Rajasthan Richard Sisson maintained that a “faction is defined as any intra-party grouping or clique which is relatively permanent, whose members conceive themselves as being a part of a particular intra-party group which acts collectively in the selection of formal political leadership; both organizational and legislative parties.

B.K. Nagla’s observation that, “factions arise through struggle for competition for power resulting in control over official and unofficial positions”. He also maintains, “factions have at least three aspects: recruitment, activity and duration”.

Paul R. Brass has observed that the main sources of factionalism in a political party are power and prestige. He also maintained that, “The strength and cohesiveness of faction depends very heavily upon the ability of the leader to distribute material benefits to his followers. Very often faction leaders --- bring private resources into local politics to build and maintain political support.

Thus by contradicting the widespread feeling that politicians are involve in factional conflict motivated only by personal gain and that ideology is ignored where such selfish interests are concerned, Carass claimed that, “ideological preferences do play a role in political behavior in so far as they are interlinked with considerations of interests”. She further asserted that, “factionalism is not determined by ‘irrational’ (i.e. emotional) and often

4. According to Nicholas, segments are also exclusive: one may not be affiliated with two factions in the same political arena at the same time. See Ralph W. Nicholas, 'Segmentary Factional Political System' in the Political Anthropology; edited by Marc J. Swartz, Victor W. Turner and Arthur Tuden, (Chicago: ALDINE Publishing Company, 1966), pp.52-53.
unpredictable personal loyalties based on the charisma of a leader or on feelings of loyalty evoked by cast and community ties or by family links”.\(^\text{11}\)

Nicholas, in another book, regards a faction as a kind of political process. In his comparative analysis of five case studies of factions he observed five characteristics of factions.\(^\text{12}\)

- Factions are conflicting groups.
- Factions are political groups.
- Factions are not corporate groups.
- Faction members are recruited by a larger. And
- Faction members are recruited on diverse principles.

By analyzing the interpretation of different scholars we may claim that, “Factionalism is a intra-group phenomenon. In the context of political parties factionalism refers to the conflict and competition between or among several groups to capture the party organization or to control the personnel and politics of the party”. The objectives of such conflicts are always power and prestige. Factional politics itself opened a style of politics that is conflicting, complex, and unprincipled and consists of highly unpredictable political behavior.

We may distinguish factions from the parties. Factions are not parties rather factions are the sub-units or smaller groups of a large political organization/ party created neither with the approval nor with the concern of the party. Two political parties are not factions whereas two groups in a political party are factions. A faction germinates at the advancement of a political leader who, in search of avenues to capture political power or to control politics of the party mobilizes the support of various likeminded persons within a party or within the same organization. Structurally factions are operated in a relatively narrow political arena within which there is fragmentation of power among the contending leaders. Usually a faction is less structured than an organization, but more uniformed and cohesive than the original group and thus has more unity of interest and action till the target is articulated. Factions appear to be stable and string as long as it maintains both power and popularity among the masses and continue to satisfy its followers by various means. Factions may be informal and impermanent and their members are recruited on diverse principles. Unlike political parties factions are not corporate groups, as they do not continue for long and do not have fixed structural proprieties. The continuity of factions depends upon the nature and continuance of conflict; the resolution of disputes results in the disappearance of factions. Unlike structural units of a society factions do not have a permanent membership. Their membership depends upon the activity of their leaders as well as on the ability of the leaders to provide benefits to his supporters in exchange for political support they give him in critical periods. Hence factions are unstable. They are not legitimate in the sense that they do not have formal rules. They organize themselves and compete for power according to informal rules. This means that organizationally factions are based on ‘articulated goals’ resulting in shifting coalitions of component segments and irrational shifts in the balance of power within the party.

In another place Lasswell defines a faction as “Any constituent group of a large unit which works for the advancement of particular persons or politics”. According to Lasswell, factions are mutually opposed not only in their struggle for political power but also in several other non-political spheres as well. These groups may stand in a relationship of total

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\(^\text{11}\) Ibid. p.184.
opposition to each other. Contrary to Lasswell in some cases it was seen that in the multifactional conflict of a party, small factions are forming coalition against the dominating one or small factions are forming coalitions with the major two rival factions to survive in politics when they were being assured that their interests would be fulfilled. So we may argue that though major factions are usually oppose each other in their struggle but small factions, for their convenience, for a certain issue may form temporary coalition with any of the big one for the time being. Even in some cases it was seen that the small factions were merged permanently with the bigger one. However, Lasswell defines three aspects of factionalism: recruitment, activity and duration.

Factions may be distinguished from influential groups by having their members in parliament and in local governing bodies. They may be distinguished from pressure group because they are concerned with a range of political interests.

Factionalism runs vertically in either way i.e. up and down the ladder. It may run from top to bottom or from bottom to top. If there is conflict in a political party, it would penetrate to its lower units like district units, sub-district units etc. The factional leaders at central level would tend to mobilize resources and support not only at the central level but also at the lower levels. Factionalism may also run in the reverse gear. If a village unit of the Awami League (AL), for example, suffers from factionalism the leaders of rival groups would tend to win the support of the leaders placed at the higher level of the party. Rarely, the party at a higher-level rung of the ladder split due to the split at a lower point of the ladder. But if already, there were divisions in the party at the higher-level, the lower level split of the party would mesh in with the higher-level split.

Factionalism also flows over horizontally. Every political party in Bangladesh has got different ancillary organizations meant to perform different functions and they have some linkage-direct or indirect- with the power structure of the party. Thus when a factional conflict starts in the AL party it would not only remain long confined to main body of the party. It is bound to spread sooner or later, to the other organizations of the party. For example its effect would spread to the workers union, students organization, peasant organizations, lawyers' association or women organizations, which are affiliated to the party.

• Characteristics of Fractional Conflict.

The characteristic of factional conflict covers the causes of factionalism, the social compositions of factions and the ties that bind leaders and followers.

The Causes of Fractionalism: Factional politics may develop in a party due to different social and political causes. Paul R. Brass has observed that the main sources of factionalism in a political party are power and prestige. Power, no doubt is the most powerful motivating factor of generation of grouping in a political party. Important political leaders, in their pursuit of power for garnering perceived benefits, seek to dominate the party by organizing groups consisting of their own supporters and tend to use these groups to calm down the rival groups within their party and to bring the party under their complete control. In addition to power, prestige also plays an important role in the formation of factions. An old political leader or an ex-ruler now may not have any obsession for power but he still is cautious to maintain the flow of his social prestige undisturbed more than capturing power. By the feeling of insecurity of his prestige from the rival group same politician may engage in forming his 13. Harold D. Lasswell, "Factions" in Encyclopedia of Social Science, Vol. 5, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p.49.
own group or may join a dominating faction in the party. Some times when an important leader of a party feels offended that he is not accorded due weight in the party or the party takes some steps which are against his own interest or wishes, his vanity would be wounded; and he would be impelled to throw challenge to the ruling elite of the party. This challenge may result in the birth of factionalism. It should be mentioned here that though there is a difference between prestige and power but these are not separable. In maximum cases prestige and power are convertible.

Difference of overall ideology and programs among the party leaders, in a nationalist party, are also the reasons behind the factional groupings. Moreover, factional conflict may occur on the difference of specific issues among the leaders; may be the issue is related to making new laws in the parliament or related to decision making process of the party or of the government. Here the unity of the faction is shaped and maintained by its programs and policies towards a particular issue or by its overall attitude towards society and social programs. Such factions, with the few exceptions, are more or less consistently coherent and stable, and their behavior also be predicted to a great extent from issue to issue at a particular political juncture and in the middle of various political forces that operate in a political system. Maximum political parties of Bangladesh were split due to ideological conflict. Mary Carras, in her study of factional politics, also emphasized the role of economic interest with the ideology in the origin and intensification of factionalism. Carras asserted that, “ideology preference do play a role in political behavior in so far as they are interlinked with considerations of personal interest”.

Intra-party factionalism also may take place in those political parties, which are ideology-oriented and cadre-based due to the difference in explanation of certain ideology. Moreover, when the party leaders agree on overall ideology, faction may emerge on the basis of disagreements on strategy and tactics to be used to achieve party objectives, such as moderates and extremists. In this respect one may refer to the factional conflict within the East Pakistan Communist Party (EPCP) in the 1960s, which finally led to the division of the party in 1966 and the emergence of a new party out of it, namely, the EPCP (ML). Those who were relatively moderate remained with the original party and those who were favoring militancy and were soft towards China in its dispute with the Soviet Union came out of the party and formed a new party and called the EPCP (ML). But for long, the latter could not remain united. A small, but determined minority who believed that violence was only right path, left the party and formed a third stream called Sarbohara (Proletariats) Party. Thus the multi-split of the original EPCP in 1960s was a function of intense factionalism mainly based upon ideological rift and internal power struggle. Even today these parties are not completely free from factional struggles though they have very limited support base and after the fall of Communist Block in Eastern Europe the socialist ideological appeal lost its previous attraction.

Factionalism may emerge in a party on the basis of personality cult or clash of personalities. There are always a few important personalities in any movement or in a political party. Even there were none in the beginning of the peoples’ movement; then the peoples’ movement themselves produce them in the course of their struggle in realizing the demands. Factionalism germinates within a political party or movement, when two (or more) leaders of

equal (and also unequal) status do not agree with each other on particular issues. The disagreement on certain issues of some leaders are natural, but when the real cause behind such conflict of principles are highly insincere and motivated by power and influence etc., when both (or more) personalities compete for more and more influence among the rank and file within the organization and among the masses; such conflict turns into a tactical character. In such process factions are formed around their names. Factions, in this type of conflict, may be of a predominantly personal nature. Even though the language of conflict may be phrased in terms of important principle and policy issues but factional conflict primarily revolve around personalities.

It is plausible to argue that if an important leader of a dominating group is disappointed in respect of receiving required benefits either for himself or for the community he represents, he would be inclined to challenge the incumbent factional leadership and would organize his own faction to overpower the ruling faction in the party.

Since 1966 peoples from different socio-economic groups with different often conflicting interests joined the AL party with the hope of gratifying their private interests after getting liberation by the leadership of AL. The party also admitted all types of people, irrespective of their faith, ideology and objectives, into its fold with a view to achieve its target by strengthening the Bengali nationalist movement. Heterogeneity and incongruity became its dominant features. Thus the AL was gradually converted into an organization comprising different groups with often mutually hostile and incompatible interests. Now the party is reduced to a ‘conflicting system’ in which different diverging forces compete among themselves to dominate the party.

Factional conflict may develop in a party due to the ‘personal ambition’ of certain leaders. Some leaders of a party sometimes feel themselves the most eligible candidate to lead the party. Their lure for power also works behind it. So to fulfill their ambition they engage in factional grouping not only in the upper strata of the party, they also try to mobilize the lower committee members in their own side. Ray points out that ‘personal ambition’ is the motive of forming intra-party alliances.17 Factional conflict may develop in a party due to the presence of various class interests in the same party fold; such as the capitalists, middle class and have-nots may have representation in the same party platform but with diverit interests. So in this case factionalism may take place when different class will try to dominate the party leadership to materialize their own class interest, which is conflicting to each other. Conflict of class interest is one of the main reasons behind the internal factionalism of the political parties of Bangladesh since long. Before the independence of Pakistan this class-conflict took place in the Muslim Leagues internal politics and divided the Bengal Pradesh Muslim League leadership into three factions: (I) The land-lords and business class were representing the Nazimuddin group, (II) Fazlul Huq was leading the rural affluent peasant class and small business peoples and (III) the Suhrawardy faction was comprised by the educated Bengali middle class and were getting the support of the rising Bengali business community. Due to this class conflict the middle class ML workers of East Pakistan formed AL when, they were defeated by the Nazimuddin group (backed by the central committee) in the conflict to capture provincial party leadership. Even today this class conflict is continuing in inside AL. Though until 1979 the AL was totally dominated by the middle class but in the course of time they were also challenged by the rich Bengali society as this new rich section, with their moneyed power and social influence, wanted to be the main protagonists of the party. Now

the party leadership is reorganized by this affluent section of the Bangladesh society, though
the middle class are still the vital force of the party and all the party ranks are controlled by
them. This new development has become a source of intense conflict between the upper class
and the middle-class in the party fold.

A weak leadership of a political party is responsible of germinating the factional
conflict in its party fold. When the leader shows his inefficiency to manage/ solve the party
problems or unable to minimize the differences in the party rank, or even having the lacking
of impartiality in his dealing with his subordinates and others; in that case, we find reactions
from the leadership rank. Conflict take place in the party fold and a portion of the leaders and
workers by breaking the previous unity form separate faction under the leadership of another
new leader. In some cases due to this intense rivalry new party emerge by splitting the
previous one. It is a general phenomenon in all of the major political parties of Bangladesh.

Factional conflict may develop on the basis of horizontal and vertical stratification
within the party. Horizontally factional conflict may occur between the organizational wing
and parliamentary wing. In this respect we may refer the factional conflict within the East
Pakistan Awami League (EPAL) during the 1956-58, which occurred between the
parliamentary groups of AL led by the provincial chief minister and party organization led by
the general sectary of EPAL. While, in the conflict, the CM was supported by other ministers
and EPAL parliamentary party, and the later was supported by the leadership and workers of
the party. In this case internal party debates within the party revolved around the issue of
party versus government. The EPAL Secretary demanded that parliamentary party and
administration should be brought under the subordination of AL leadership, while the
‘ministers group’ insisted upon the independence of the state government from the party
decision.18 Some times factional conflict may occure vertically within the party as had
happened during 1976-81 among the same rank leadership of AL.

External competition with other parties also may occur internal differences in the party
leadership. Some times it had been seen that to survive in the competitive political arena or in
the government, different leaders wanted to follow some tactical strategy, which was differing
the original ideology or programs of the party. Finally it created factional conflict and split in
the party.

Previous relationship of some leaders with other political parties or political ideology
may create factions in a political party. In the third world countries like Bangladesh, the Army
Generals after occupying the governing power use to form political parties, by distributing
government patronage, to remain in power permanently. They gather political leaders, from
different ideology and party in their party fold. But these defected leaders, though they are
opportunist, cannot totally forget their previous ideology and try to maintain their own
original ideological identity in the new party. Moreover, they joined the new party to fulfill
hunger for power. As for example, the ‘Bangladesh Nationalist party’ was formed by General
Ziaur Rahman to fulfill his political ambition by strengthening his power. Some pro-Islamic
factions, who were previously attached with ML as well as some pro-leftists (NAP) leaders
and some more leaders of different political background joined the party also to fulfill their
power aspiration by defecting their previous party. Still now, after several years, these people
are maintaining their separate identity, through forming their own faction, in the party. As a
result the party is not safe from factional conflict.

18. For detail of this conflict See, Abul Mansur Ahmed, Fifty Years of Politics as I Saw It (an autobiography in
Different professional groups such as ex-bureaucrats, ex-military officers, business people, lawyers, etc. nowadays they are enrolling in the big political parties of Bangladesh. In the party they always try to maintain their factional identity and always try to pursue the interest of their own through using the party platform. Factional antagonism also takes place among them due to the presence of these groups of opposite interests especially, in the major two political parties. Whenever, the parties are in power, these interest groups engage in cold-war to capture important minister-ship and in the conflict they use to get help from their own lobby involving in different profession.

Factionalism tends to flourish in a one party-dominant system. If one party is pre-dominantly strong and other parties are too weak and divided from each other to pose any challenge; thus the absence of external stress tends to induce internal strain in a party. J.K. Mahapatra argues, “these are largely responsible for more factional conflict in those state organization of Congress Party where the party is pre-dominant since long”.

In addition to these factional conflicts may develop in a party on the basis of various reasons, such as: the indirect influence of foreign powers, lack of tolerance in the rank of party leadership, the army intervention in politics and their intrigue to weaken the party system for their survival in power, the mass poverty and lack of public consciousness for democracy, conflict between the progressives and conservatives in a party platform, regionalism, cast, creed, religion etc. also do work in the germination of various factions in a party platform.

Further, more factional politics flourish in a political party under certain conditions. Paul R. Brass, in his study, has pointed out some conditions, which, he feels, were responsible for the emergence of factionalism within the Congress party in Uttar Pradesh during 1960s. These are: “the absence of an external threat, the presence of an internal consensus upon ideological issues and the absence of an authoritative leadership.” However factional conflict can exist in the absence of either of these conditions as had happened in AL. Since 1976 to till now none of these conditions prevail in the case of AL in Bangladesh.

The editor of ‘Financial Express’ Riaz Uddin Ahmed tells in his own way about the reasons of factional conflict, “Political parties are the largest institutions to institutionalize democracy in a country. Establishing one strong democratic foundation of a country largely depends on the democratization of its own internal party organization. Since the political parties of Bangladesh do not practice democracy in their party fold and all the big parties remain personality-oriented that is why leadership conflict and factionalism take place in political parties. Since the party leaders and workers cannot freely express their own opinion, they engage in various kinds of grouping inside the political parties. Usually, this internal factionalism in a party takes place due to their feeling of deprivation from political power. Since one man controls the party’s activities in an authoritarian manner, so others are deprived from political power but are not able to stage an open protest. So from this depriving feeling secretly they form groups, engage in grouping and ultimately engage in open conflict. As a result off and on big/renowned political leaders by leaving their previous parties either join other parties or float different new parties.

Faction in a party may be a coalition of some leaders. They may be tied together with the faction leader by personal bonds of friendship, party by cast or religious or class loyalties or by economic interest and most of all by political interests. They may be primarily revolved around the faction leader. Membership of these factions changes constantly so that it often

20. Paul R. Brass,...............................................................
appears that there is no persistent conflict and no permanent alliances, that all is perpetually in
flush. In fact personal enmities between the prominent leaders constitute the boundary lines
for factional conflict and for shifting alliance. Another very important thing is that intra-party
factionalism which germinates basically from different prominent leaders personality clash
are the primary casual variables in producing party schism.

The Composition of Factions: The central element of a faction is the leader. Any faction
leader cannot stand-alone. He must have followers around him in forming a group. A faction
is formed mainly in order to promote the interest of its leader or leaders. Faction membership
consists of a “core” and “support”. The leader or leaders comprise its “core” or inner circle
and the followers compose its “support” or outer circle (periphery). The core of a faction
remains with the faction leader through thick and thin, and its members are strongly
connected to the leader through his activity. The support structure (outer circle) of a faction is
large in number. The leader/leaders recruit followers in order to strengthen his/their-fighting
capability. The leader always try to increase this number of his support by recruiting members
who are not yet members of any faction or by enticing/ alluring some members of rival
factions to defect and join the group. The interests of the supporters at the periphery are
always secondary. By supporting their leader the followers cannot expect the share of political
power (which is the primary interest of the factional leaders) they only expect some patronage
and reward and will remain with the leader as long as he rewards them for their support by
providing them with material benefits. Otherwise they may desert him and join the rival
faction if they get tempting offered by the later. So the outer circle consists of followers
representing the floating votes of internal party politics. Thus the relationship between the
faction leader and his supporters is reciprocal; both need each other and neither can thrive at
the expense of the other.

There may exist both the “direct” and “indirect” structure in a faction. It acquires a
direct structure when the members of the core constitute the lieutenants of the prominent
leader to whom the followers owe direct allegiance. It assumes in indirect structure when the
secondary leader (the lieutenants or any other members of the core) have independent
followings and posses the ability to secede. It happens in a internal group of a party when a
faction is a result of a coalition of minor factions and the smaller faction leaders still have
good number of followers or when the main leader is having some youth lieutenants with
unique organizing capability and popularity. Here for the indirect leadership reward is totally
“political interest”. The only conditions the indirect leaders insist upon is that when the leader
advances himself, he must take his inner circle with him. In practice a faction combines direct
and indirect leaders in its structure but the balance in maximum case remains in the hand of
the main leader though some times it may fluctuate for the time being.

Both his control over authoritative power and the materialistic resources distinguish
the faction leader from other members of a faction. Faction leader differs widely from others
in personal temperament. An ideal faction leader posses seniority, education, integrity, strong
organizing capability, capacity to detect the burning political issue of that time or has the
capability to convert a non-issue into a burning issue to make political movement for
capturing (party and government) power, capacity to understand peoples problems and
struggles and has the ability to appease the peoples temperament. A successful leader has
power over the fortune of others and has power to organize party affairs. He is the man who
can get things done in his own way despite the contrary wishes of the less powerful rival
leaders. Such a leader is called “Bhai” or “leader” by his lieutenants. Further more, faction
leaders are competitors for political power. To them, factional interest (i.e. interest of the
core) may carry more preference over the interest of the political party. In the course of fight, personal interest of factional leaders gains momentum and develops autonomous status for the faction inside the party. The warring sides fail to maintain minimum norms and behave as if they belong to two hostile political parties: both side do not hesitate to attack each other with all venom and fury. Either side puts much stake in the outcome of the duel that whoever, losses tends to prefer to leave the party. They have great control over resources than any of their supporters; they are involved in a transaction in which they provide patronage and reward in return of political support. A successful faction leader is one who knows the art of political manipulation and has access to abundant funds.

Both the members of core and periphery of a faction come from diverse social and economic origins. Factional grouping is based on diverse relationship between the leaders and followers. Leaders and followers may be connected on diverse ways: patron-client, friendship, kinship, Guru-Sisya relationship etc. No single type of support would provide enough strength to make effective factional group. Some times factional leaders bring private resources or some time they are funded by some donor groups; such as some well wishers, interest group, or even in some cases some foreign countries use to provide funds to preserve their interests or to establish their own minded government in a country.

**Typology of Factional Conflict.**

The pattern of factional competition may appear in different types depending upon the relative strength and number of factions involved in the conflict. Brass divided factional system into three types. The most usual one is by-factional system where two informal groups, with more or less equal power, are evenly engaged in conflict and each of them tends to counteract the other. In other words there is balance of power between the two and neither is in a position to dominate the party. This implies that the dominance has to be shared by them or rotate between them. These informal groups maybe usually referred as “Ministerials” versus “Dissidents” conflict. By-factional conflict produces bitterness at the political system. Uni-factional system refers to such a factional conflict where a single faction totally dominates the political climate and minor factions continue to operate within the party. The latter exist as factions for namesake without having any marked impact upon the power structure of the party. In this conflict there factions maybe named after leaders name. The third stream is known as multi-functional system. Such a system indicates that there are more than two factions in a party and none of them is overwhelmingly superior to others. Such kind of factional system is most fluid, tends to be most unstable and each one’s strength is likely to change either for better or for worse. At no stage it is possible to say with certainty and confidence that particular faction is dominant one. This system provides comparatively less bitter atmosphere than the other types in an internal political arena of a party.

All type of factional system are more or less unstable as their units are informal and subject to change and their rules of conflict are fluid and ambiguous due to the lack of a normative basis within a corporate group. They are not organized over stable conflict structures and any factional system can be converted into other one through the phases of conflict. For instance, an informal conflict may appear in a multi-factional structure, which becomes by-factional in the course of time through the fusion of minor factions and finally be transformed in a uni-factional structure; or the conflict may begin in a uni-factional system with the emergence of a new dynamic faction and it may convert into by-factional system. With the course of time it may appear into multi-factional system.

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A party may have a number of factions. A faction may oppose several other factions within the party, and maybe friendly towards some factions of other political parties. Such a situation of antagonism within the party and harmony between different party factions is found due to the ideological unison. The socialist faction of AL, as for example, has been sympathetic with the faction of CPB. This trend of intra-party factionalism and inter-party factional union of the dominant factions of two or many party may provide opportunity to the respective parties to form coalition in governing the country or in strengthening the opposition movement against the governing party.

Factional conflict is a political process, which occurs with the corporate groups (party), and is not governed by normal rules. The sanctions against it are heaviest in the face of external threat or pressure. However, it is the concern of the authoritative leadership of a corporate group (party) to keep the activities of factions within strict control, while at the same time ensuring that the activities of the factional conflict do not threat the unity and effectiveness of the group within the broader arena.

• Leadership Roles.

Several leadership roles come into play in the regulation of factional conflict. These may broadly be divided into four categories: command, arbitration, mediation and management. An authoritative leadership exercise command when he decrees any decisions without consulting the factions concerned, that a certain rule must be observed; he exercises arbitration when he issues such a degree after hearing the factional leader; and he mediates when he persuades the faction leaders to find common ground and to reach a mutually satisfactory decision after negotiation. Mediation is expensive in terms of resources, a leader in authority is obliged to command in resolving factional disputes. In addition if he arbitrates or mediates between factions, it amounts to the granting of recognition to the leader. The leader of a corporate group (party) must ensure that the power at his disposal enables him to resolve internal conflict by command. Otherwise, he will run the risk of sacrificing his authority and the coherence of the group. In his managerial role the leader of corporate group (party) has two functions: first, to ensure that there is sufficient power to enforce a decision; second, to provide and enforce normative and pragmatic roles for the internal policies of the group so that factional competition is either prevented or strictly regulated.

Some or all of these leadership roles maybe allocated to separate persons depending on the seriousness of disputes within the faction. However when leaders are unable to perform these roles during factional conflict then inter-factional differences tend to become permanent. These groups then cease to be factions and emerge as formal political groups and acquire an independent existence.

• The Functions of Factions:

Factions and factional conflict may perform both integrative and disintegrative functions for a political party. The disintegrative impact of factionalism is more evident impact. The integrative functions, which factions perform, are less obvious, but may be more important in the long run.

Disintegrative Functions: In a political party to resolve the differences between the factions they use to follow two paths: (I) the principle of majority rule, which has general legitimacy in modern western democracy, and (II) the use of internal mechanism. These may broadly divide into four categories: command, arbitration, mediation and management. An authoritative or charismatic leader exercise command to resolve the factional conflict. When there is the absence of such type of leaders the role of arbitration or mediation are performed
by the neutral senior party leaders, who have no factional affiliations. However the number of arbitrator or mediators may decrease or the kind of a person who best performs the role of arbitration may not be recruited when the dominant faction itself performs the recruitment functions for the party. Where the principle of majority role or the arbitration is no longer available to resolve the conflict, a real danger exists that the party organization may split apparently.

The factional conflict some times is so intense that party organization may be occupied with their internal struggle and have failed to perceive external threats. In such case it is not uncommon for a party to loose most of the parliamentary seats in a general election, even when the party is holding popularity among the masses and got strong workers base in the political arena.

Where arbitration cannot mediate conflict, disaffected and defeated faction leaders may run official party candidates of sabotage election campaign from within the organization. A disaffected faction leader does not mind participating in the defeat of entire party organization if this is the only way to defeat his faction rivals.

Factional politics in a traditional society is personal politics. Conflicts of prestige between the faction leaders lead to intense factional disputes, which are often in their very natural insoluble. When prestige or honors become a primary importance in politics, the possibilities of resolving conflicts are reduced, for honor cannot be shared. In this case even political rivalry may carry the conflict between the two leaders into their business and social life. In Conflicts, which such extra-political ramifications are not amenable to ordinary political solutions.

The disintegrative impact of factional conflict on a party organization may lead to a decline in the party’s electoral strength. Some times party leadership becomes weaken by loosing some of its popular leaders due to the factionalism and split in its party fold.

Integrative Functions: In fact there is direct relationship between the intensity of factional conflict and the size of a party membership. Factional opponents enroll primary members for the local organizations in order to voting strength in the organizational elections.

Some times factional conflict broadens the bases of participations of a certain party organization. Not only are more members enrolled, but also new class, religious and interest groups become politicized and integrated into the party organization adding to its diversity and to its strength. The integration of different cast, creed, class, religion or interest group into internal factional system of an organization prevents either the dominance of particular conflicting group over others or the development of polarized conflict between different opposition class, cast or religious groups. It makes a party more moderate and more pragmatic.

Factional conflict also facilitates the emergence of promising youth leadership of organizational capabilities. When one faction triumphs over the other, the change in the political fortune would not be confined to the top leaders of both factions. Other members of these factions, both important and not important, would also be affiliated by this process of fluctuation in political status. Many members of the winner faction would be immediately catapulted to the prominent positions whereas the counterparts of the looser factions would be stripped of their power. Those who go up in the political ladder in this process include both elderly and youthful leaders. It is important to remember that in addition to the emergent youthful leaders of the winning side who get a sudden push to the top, some youth activists of the looser side, in spite of the side’s defeat also manage to gain prominence and recognition by dint of their organizational and fighting capabilities demonstrated during the factional combat. Further more factionalism is propitious for new political recruitments. Many new
elements are recruited by both sides in order to enlarge their support base and increase their power. Thus many elements get a chance not only to join politics, but also to get hard and rigorous training in it. Thus many elements get chance not only to join politics, but also to get hard and rigorous training in it. Thus training proves vulnerable for future roles in more important political arenas. Thus factionalism proves to be a breeding ground for new entrants into politics.

**Hypothesis:** In this thesis an attempt has been made to find out answers of some principle questions on factional politics in Bangladesh, which always comes in front of political scholars and analysts.

1. That the politics in Bangladesh is factional.
2. That factions are always lead by individual party leaders not by collective bodies.
3. That the absence of internal democratic practice creates factional infighting inside a party.
4. Frequently it is observed that the parties are formed from the infighting and defections of the popular political parties do not have enough mass followers.
5. That this type of factional conflict and subsequent formation of new parties is helpful in the political development of a country.
6. That it is seen that the parties floated by the breakaway factions and faction leaders of the big parties cannot survive in the political arena of Bangladesh.
7. Factionalism tends to flourish in the absence of strong leadership in a party.
8. All the big political parties of the Indian subcontinent are led by the hereditary leadership instead of democratically elected leadership.
9. The infighting in the governing parties is responsible for the abduction of power by the military generals, e.g. the infighting in the AL was responsible for the assassination of Mujib in 1975 and for subsequent long days undemocratic military rule in Bangladesh.
10. The opposition parties’ internal conflict helped the military regimes/authoritarian powers to survive in power for a lengthy period. Military regimes are responsible for the factionalism and splits of political parties in Bangladesh.
11. The like-minded or friendly political parties play important role in the infighting of a political party.
12. Prior to the every splits of AL every time first its student wing Bangladesh Chatra League (BCL) was divided. The BCL leaders and workers are influenced by the personal politics of the big guns of AL.
13. The branch units and front organizations of the parties infected by the infighting of the top brass leadership of a political party because of same ideological leaning, personal relation or other reasons.
14. The sudden joining of the non-political personalities (such as retired civil and military bureaucrats, business people and other people from different occupation etc) creates infighting in the parties. The inclusion of these people in the political parties reduce the confidence of the lower unit leaders on the central leadership.
15. Factionalism impedes the growth of healthy politics in a country.

The study is divided into five chapters excluding introduction. In the first chapter an attempt is made to trace historical background of the creation of Bangladesh in a very brief manner. It also seeks to trace the character of Pakistan homeland movement and
Bengali nationalist movement, the reasons of the decline of the ML, which had fought for the achievement of Pakistan, the rise and growth of AL as the espouser/advocator of Bengali nationalism and other parties’ role in the Bengali nationalist movement in a very brief manner.

The second chapter is devoted to a study of the growth of the political parties and party system of Bangladesh. In one course of discussion in the growth of political parties interparty factionalism is discussed here briefly. In brief this chapter tried to trace the socio-economic background of the political leaders of the country. There is the existence of about two hundred political parties in Bangladesh but except few parties all exist merely in names. Only few of the parties have party offices, constitutions and manifestoes. In the parliamentary election only four parties dominant presence is visible. Except them other parties even don’t have regular representation in the parliament. As a result a political system is developed in Bangladesh concentrating the four major political parties of Bangladesh. These parties are AL, BNP, JP and Jammat. So the chapter limited its discussed on the programs and ideologies of these major political parties.

The third chapter exclusively discussed and analyzed the AL organization, its nature and functioning. This chapter is devoted to an analysis of the AL party and its ancillary organizations structures. It also showed how the branch units and ancillary organizations involve in the infighting of the top-brass party leaders. Moreover characteristics of its leadership, workers group and support base of AL; relationship of the branch and front organizations with the main body AL leadership; internal working of the party; activities of the party’s various machineries to strengthen its support base etc are discussed.

Factionalism has been a regular phenomenon of Bangladesh politics. The history of political parties in the country has been that of their creation, breakup and reformation. The largest and dominant political party of Bangladesh is no more different from other parties of the country. As during the Pakistan era the AL was grown as the exponent of Bengali nationalism during the Bengali nationalist movement and it picked up the support of various group by adopting various slogans. It had both socialist as well as the country’s leading capitalists within its fold. What is more important after independence the party leadership was recruited from the affluent middle class i.e. the surplus farmers from the rural areas and lawyers, business men and literal professionals from the urban areas. Still the party is leading by heterogeneous elements from professional and ideological background. Since the beginning the AL is full of factionalism. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the origin, nature and causes of factionalism in the AL party fold. It also discusses how the factionalism also spreads in the front organizations and lower level units of the party, the role of other parties and the government regimes in the AL factionalism, is the infighting of the governing party responsible for the takeover of power by the military regime etc, the final consequences of the newly formed parties emerged from the breakaway factions of AL, the factional tensions among the other political parties in Bangladesh etc. The impact of factionalism and splits of the political parties in Bangladesh is also briefly discussed in this chapter. For the convenience of the analysis the chapter is divided into six parts. The first part traced the factionalism in AL and other parties during the days of liberation struggle. The second part discussed the factionalism and splits in ruling party AL just after the independence. It also discussed how the Bangladesh army and administration also affected by the factionalism in those days and as the result how AL regime was overthrown by a military coup. In the third and fourth part an attempt is made to show the intense factional infighting among the lieutenants of Mujib to capture the party leadership and as a result the party was loosing its popular support.
base in the masses. To save the party from final destruction one potion of the party leadership welcome the hereditary leadership replaced the traditional leadership of AL.
The fifth part concentrates on the efforts of Mujib-daughter Hasina’s effort to establish solo-leadership. It discussed to make permanent her position in the party how Hasina used one faction against another in the party and compelled her competitors in party leadership to leave the party. As the result of Hasina’s policy tow new parties, BAKSAL and Gono Forum, emerged. Finally the sixth part analyzed how Hasina reduced the remaining factional difference in the party and established her sole control over it. Now the party was well-prepared for going to power. This part also discussed the infighting in the AL government after its coming to power, the frustration of the old dedicated local party leaders and workers when for the interest of an election win they were replaced by the non-political new-comers who were rich and more influential in their locality etc. The final chapter draws conclusions on the basis of the study.