Neither the political parties of the 1970s nor the people at large demanded the return of Islam to the public sphere. However, political Islam provided the much needed legitimacy for the military regimes and their Islamist partners.



the organisation) and they are often non-material (i.e. done for the sake of itself).

Moreover, it is a condition of successful political organisation that members have some trust in each other and some loyalty to the organisation. In an organisation with high morale it is taken for granted that they will make small sacrifices, and perhaps even large ones, for the sake of the organisation. Such was not unfortunately the case with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

The only formal organisations that exist in most parts of Bangladesh are the mosque and the state. Inability to create and maintain organisation is clearly of the greatest obstacle, retarding economic development in the region. The lack of substantive developmental ideology compelled the vast majority of rural Bangladeshi Muslims to turn to their religion.

Neither the political parties of the 1970s nor the people at large demanded the return of Islam to the public sphere. However, political Islam provided the much needed legitimacy for the military regimes and their Islamist partners. For the first time the mosque and the state were integrated by constitutional means creating a new Bangladeshi identity on the foundation of political Islam.

The crisis of a development ideology in the rural sphere was also felt by the development NGO introduced by Ziaur Rahman who bifurcated the constituency of the left political parties of the peasantry. Thus both the left political parties and the development NGOs were vying over the same client base.

In the society of amoral familists there is no connection between abstract political principle (i.e. Ideology) and concrete behaviour in the ordinary relationship of everyday life. The discrepancy between ideology and behavior in practical affairs tends to discredit ideology in the eyes of the peasants.

Thus the NGOs flush with aid money won out because they had resources and well-managed programs that the rural people could benefit from. The left political parties did not have a vision that would appeal to the peasants, whereas the NGOs offered them credit, literacy programs, healthcare and other training programs which they found useful. In the process, the NGOs have created their own constituencies and have brought their beneficiaries into new forms of social regulation as subjects of neo-liberal economic policies.

In this depoliticisation of left politics, many left party leaders and cadres have abandoned party ideology and joined the development NGO sector as an alternative to revolutionary politics, thereby, creating a vacuum in the left political sphere in Bangladesh that was filled by political Islam at the grassroots.

In a society of amoral familists, there are no leaders and no followers. No one will take the initiative in outlining a course of action and persuade others to embark upon it unless it is in his self-interest to do so, and, if one did offer leadership, the group would refuse it out of distrust. This was best understood by none other than the political Islamists, opportunist NGOs, and the disgruntled leftists in rural Bangladesh at the time.

By democratisation, I mean processes whereby the rules and procedures of democratic citizen-