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Are we civilised ?

BNP politics

Why violent protests?



The metamorphosis of BNP that began with its founder president late Ziaur Rahman withdrawing ban on religion-based politics and allowing Jamaat Ameer Golam Azam to enter and stay in Bangladesh with a Pakistani passport got maturity when he was given Bangladeshi citizenship, and his party a share of the cake in the government this time.

Some questions, however, still remain unanswered. For example, Jamaat-e-Islami, according to its party manifesto, is an Islamic party aiming to establish Islamic rule in the country based on Sharia law. It does not believe in women leadership. It opposed the liberation war of Bangladesh and took side with the Pakistani occupation army in committing a genocide in Bangladesh during the war of liberation. It has neither felt repentant nor apologised to the nation for this heinous crime which means that this party still does not believe in the independence of Bangladesh.

The BNP, on the other hand, is a right leaning party apparently committed to democratic as well as Islamic values. How much it exercises the values in practice is a different matter. It has no agenda for Islamic rule or Sharia law for the country. It has no problem with women leadership. Its chairperson has been a woman for the last 25 years. Its founder president was a valiant freedom fighter and a number of freedom fighters are still there in the party. How does it reconcile with the ideologies of the Jamaat?

The people of Bangladesh are religious minded but not fundamentalists. They love democracy. They have a long history and tradition of democratic struggle. The Jamaat does not, and cannot, believe in the type of democracy we like to practice. They have been participating in our democratic process as a strategic ploy to gain strength and seize power, if need be through violent means in the name of Jihad. That they have achieved this strength (by the courtesy of BNP) has been amply demonstrated in the recent past.

So, the big question is, 'who is

going to toe whose line?' The Jamaat is to merge with the BNP or vice versa? Hope Tarek Zia is fully aware of the fact that all indications are there for the latter. Only the other day one Jamaat lawmaker told a public meeting that the next alliance would be Jamaat-BNP alliance, not BNP-Jamaat. Reportedly, they have asked for 100 seats this time. No wonder they will ask for 200 seats next time, if at all they want to pursue the same line of politics until then.

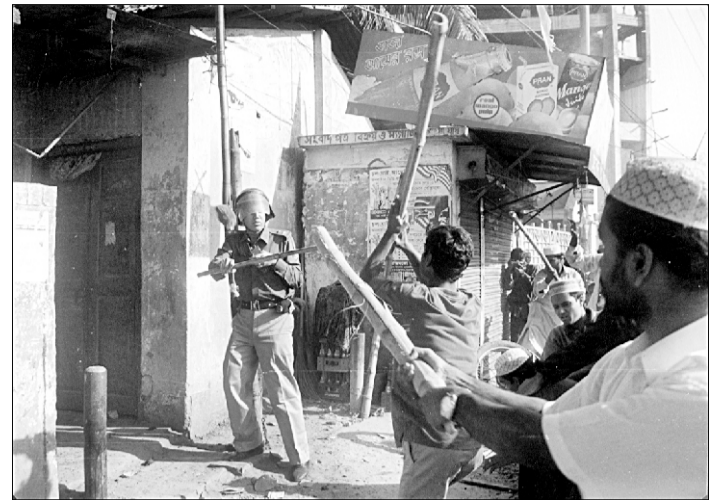
Another pertinent question could be the status of BNP freedom fighters. Will they vacate their seats to make room for Rokons or prefer to live together as neo-Rokons forgetting that once they fought against them for freedom of their motherland? What about the Bir Uttoms and Bir Bicroms?

More importantly, the founder Ameer and the spiritual leader of the Jamaat, Professor Golam Azam makes no secret of his intention to revive the two nation theory of 1947. By shaking hands with Jamaat leaders publicly and confirming Moulana Delwar Hossain Saeedi's earlier claim that BNP and Jamaat are two sons of the same mother, Tarek Zia has not only dispelled doubts from the minds of those of his party men who had reservations about keeping the Jamaat in the alliance, he is also probably trying to give the BNP a new dimension and outlook in the backdrop of a highly explosive political, social and economic situation prevailing in the country. We might name it neo-BNP. The Jamaat may prefer a different name such as JB (the initial alphabets of the two parties).

But certainly the voters would like to have an honest reply from Tarek Zia before the next election about the points I have raised above.

Capt. Husain Imam 1/B Paribag, Dhaka-1000

We have witnessed various kinds of movements in our country from time to time. But the sad truth is that most of the protests are registered in a chaotic, violent manner. When examine the issue closely, then it seems that the movement is not for establishing the rights of common people, but for destroying the country in the name of a movement. The agitating parties are actually going on the rampage. A few days ago when some supporters of a political party were demonstrating for getting regular supply of electricity, gas and water, they smashed vehicles on the roads to give vent to their anger. This was not the only incident in recent times which gave a clear



picture of lawlessness associated with movements.

Our garment sector is also facing such a situation. It is not clear why people have to destroy properties while demonstrating. What right do

they have to cause harm to others? Mohammad Zahedul Islam Kaiser English Department International Islamic University Chittagong.

We claim that we are civilised. We live in the era of modern science & technology. But we are continuing our cruel mission against mankind. The wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon have proved that point beyond an iota of doubt. It is said that man was a bar-

baric being in the ancient times. But what is the difference between the ancient human being and his modern counterpart? The primordial man used arrow & bow for killing, whereas at present we use atom bombs and other sophisticated weapons for the

same purpose. The mentality still remains unchanged only the modus operandi has changed.

Where is our humanity? Frankly speaking, have we become civilised? M. M. Emrul Kayas Department of English JU

Noble options of voluntary service

People join voluntary services as proud representatives of their businesses or professions, because, they have an ethics. Ethics is so important in everything we do, particularly in voluntary services. Please, just look at the Four-Way-Test:

- 1. Is it the truth? 2. Is it fair to all concerned? 3. Will it build good will and better friendships? 4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

If we examine these four questions carefully, we soon realise that every element we need for success

is right there. Voluntary services are a good way to assist young people in learning about future careers.

The world's first students' anti-smoking organisation--Students Anti Smoking Committee-SASC: 86 (Established on 21 February 1986 in the Department of English, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh), Alliance Against Tobacco Products-ATP, ADHUNIK-87, CAT, The Commitment, Bandhan-86 are going to render valuable social service. The media should play a cooperative role in this respect.

Ali Neymat On email

Demise of a hope

This is in reaction to the suicide committed by a brilliant female student of the department of English, University of Dhaka. This incident shocked us all and compelled us to think about the overall atmosphere of higher educational institutions. Everybody can guess from the newspaper reports about the cause behind such a cruel decision by a meritorious student to end her life. Everybody, aware of the open secrets of the campus of any higher educational institution in the country, knows very well that hundreds of women are suffering from such agony which may force them to take the path of Khadiza. But did their

guardians send them to university to lose their dearest one? Or could they ever imagine that anything like this could happen? Never has any guardian expected anything like this, though in the recent past guardians had to worry about their sons due to rampant political violence. But now they have got to worry about their daughters also. As the situation demands, they have to tell their daughters to remain alert against cheats and swindlers. The girls have to be cautious about developing such relationships. Moreover, the authorities must also do something immediately in this regard. They must sit for preparing

a code of conduct to be strictly followed by the students on the campus. No indecent behaviour should be overlooked by the disciplinary body in the name of individual freedom. A few anti-social elements should not be allowed to spoil the overall atmosphere of the campus. And conscious students also have to stand against these elements. It is time effective measures were taken to prevent any such unwarranted death.

strongly believe every conscious citizen will share my concern. A reader Dept of English, DU

Smoking

People know that smoking is bad, yet they smoke. Maybe, some of them do not know how bad it is. Some young men smoke for howing their smartness. They think that it's a kind of fashion. We know that man is a slave of his habits. Once he starts smoking, he cannot stop it easily. However, it is not impossible to give up. What you need is a strong will. If we purchase a bottle of oil hen we see its expiry date. But few people seem to bother about the statutory warning on the cigarette packets.

Why do they take it so lightly?

Md. Anwar Hossain Department of English International Islamic University, w Chittagong



CityCell-Hello 0123

CityCell is one of the major mobile phone operators of our country. Recently, a new CityCell advertisement-titled City Cell Hello 0123. The background music that has

been used in this advertisement is from the latest Bollywood blockbuster "fanaa" (chand si farish).

We don't think that the idea is good. All business enterprises should try to associate

themselves with the indigenous cultural heritage of Bangladesh. They could have used any all time hit Bangla song, but they did not.

Mustaqim Ahmed Mayakanon, Dhaka



TV GUIDE

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

Table with columns for News Bulletin, BTV, CHANNEL-i, ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL i, ntv, TARA BANGLA, and BBC WORLD.

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