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# Will dialogue produce any results?



When the people of Bangladesh are wriggling under the pressures of incredible power shortage and price hike of essentials, the secretaries general of the two major parties, Abdul Jalil and Mannan Bhuiyan, are holding the much talked about dialogue. And people of the country are awaiting some solution to the political impasse that is threatening to destroy the spirit of democracy. We all hope that the politicians will find a way out of the crisis.

**Rafiqul Islam Rime**  
Agrabad, Chittagong

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Terming it as a conversation on electoral reforms, both the parties are now playing hide and seek with the entire nation. We the commoners are still very much confused.

Why can't we come out of this imbroglio?  
**K Hasan**, Jalalabad Area, Sylhet

For the sake of the nation, I, as an individual, humbly request Justice Hassan, who is a honourable man to withdraw himself. We the Non Resident Bangladeshis are at a loss with the recent developments where 2-3 individuals are holding the future of the country at ransom. They are pushing the whole country and its 140 million helpless people to a confrontation; that is unnecessary and the nation and its people will have to pay a heavy price for it.

I was a student of Dhaka University during the tumultuous days of 1969-1971 and shared the dreams and aspirations with the rest of the nation. Looking back, it has been a great disappointment for me.

I feel that the general population of Bangladesh deserved more.  
**Saleh Afzal**, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

mon diseases such as diabetes and heart ailment are becoming very prevalent.

I do not know how scientific these conclusions are. Some people would find a racial undertone in it. But there is no denying the fact that this tsunami style arrival of the previously uncommon diseases like diabetes is very closely related to our changed lifestyle which the article described in details.

Eating fast food has become a fad in our country. Eating out is considered as the sign of prosperity. Paying a visit to friends and families with a big box of sweets is our social obligation. We grew up reading story about of one our legendary leader's eating abilities. Torturing guests by pushing extra serving of food on the plate is still an act of hospitality.

We love our food and overdoing it is socially acceptable and encouraged. In Ramadan when we are supposed to restrain our food consumption, we try to eat more varieties of food and the prices go up.

What we eat has gone through a sea change also. For some, what used to be the menu of our occasional feast have become the stuffs of our routine intake. There is TV programme in Dhaka which would give us idea that the gift of our mental ability is related to the partaking a special pricey powdery food in a big bottle, even though that concoction is never consumed in the Western world.

Our celebrities are peddling food and products, which we do not need, nor those products are good for us. But the marketing machines of the multinationals are creating an aura of desirability for things, which make us helpless. Western nations have stopped drinking those sugar loaded drinks, which we have started drinking in earnest.

The tension of daily struggle is taking its toll also. An individual is quite helpless in these arenas of modern day gladiators. Anybody can get any disease for various reasons.

This is not to implicate anybody. But as a society we have to set our priorities to tackle diseases which are closely related to our lifestyle and eating habits. Good news is that an individual and the family can still play a big role by sorting out the priorities of their life long before the killer disease like diabetes actually hits us.

**Anwarul Islam**  
Michigan, USA  
**Tareq Zia**

BNP senior joint secretary general in a congregation admitted that some segment of the alliance top-



# Twin victories!

Apart from winning the cricket match with Zimbabwe in the field of sports, Bangladesh has won the coveted Nobel Prize on Friday for Peace when Dr. Muhammad Yunus won the Prize this year for the simple yet revolutionary idea of loaning tiny sums to poor people looking to escape poverty by starting businesses by founding the Grameen Bank in the country. It is remarkable that the Nobel Peace Prize committee has chosen a non-nuclear state like Bangladesh to award the Nobel Peace Prize this year. And one fondly hopes that this trend of promoting developing countries that are committed to the cause of total disarmament and world peace through advancing the cause of the poor - a mission the present powers of the world dominated by the terror card holder, the USA and the like, have shelved in order to advance their so-called national interest in the Arab world and elsewhere will continue. The twin victories for Bangladesh both in sports and in peace missions is indeed historic and commendable.

**Dr. Abdul Ruff Colachal**  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

notch indulged in corruption. If the BNP is voted to power again they will uproot corruption. Where there's a will there's a way. If he has the willpower he can do it before 28th October. There is no need for another term to make a paradigm. In another programme he queried who bought a house and made registration of a company in the USA? An oblique reference to Sajib Wazed Joy. Two questions to Tareq Zia as an ordinary citizen.

punitive measures against the corrupt elements?  
(2) You never challenge any of the claims of Sheikh Hasina. Why did not you refute the allegations brought by her against the BNP and its leaders?

**A citizen**  
On e-mail

# Biman-a lost case?

There have been many criticisms of Biman and suggestions to shut it down on grounds of unreliability of service, professional incompetence, technical incompetence, over-manning, corruption etc but I have not seen or heard of any criticism of the government for chronic late payments, and non-investment in this national airline which is extensively used for loss-making political purposes.

Only a few days ago a financial report said that Biman had incurred a loss of about Tk 2 billion on non-profitable routes last year with further clamour to shut it down or privatise it.

I am sure most of these critics would consider British Airways to be a top class suc-

cessful airline which completely satisfies the travellers, makes regular profits and pays regular dividends to its shareholders. So it must come as a shock to them to learn in today's business news that there is a 2 billion pound (or greater) hole in BA's pension funds which is about 125 times more than the loss

Biman made on unprofitable routes last year. Because of this pension hole some apparently profitable and reputable airlines like Emirates have declined merger with it or taking it over. Many airlines funded by oil rich states are highly reputed and seen to be profitable, however their full accounts of debts, liabilities



and assets are never made public. It is very easy to show and sustain a successful front by unfair, negligent or weighted practices and creative accounting until the bubble bursts as the Maxwell Corporation, BCCI, Equitable Life, Enron etc have recently shown.

Biman has the credit to be transparent with its losses for most of which the political routes are at fault i.e. the government itself.

Therefore I say to all including the government to give Biman a fair wind and support in this cutthroat business.

**Shafi Ahmed**  
London

# 10X8