

# Serving humanity should be our guiding principle

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good and thinking people in politics. We shall have to work with lot of patience.

**Advocate Emdadul Haque**  
In our country people vote for the person who has the better chance of winning the election. "We shall vote for the winner...we don't want to waste our vote ....", we could not come out of

such mind set. We politicians could not make the people aware. In terms of election system, West Bengal of India is way ahead of us. They have introduced electronic voting system. We need to introduce this system here. At the same time we need to introduce voter ID card with photo to hold free and fair election. And, there should be change of the person who is

being considered to be the chief of the next caretaker government.

**Comrade Shah Alam**  
Our main problem is the economy of snatching. This has resulted in politics and values of snatching. If there is economy of snatching then there will be politics and values of snatching. Because politics is the condensed form of economy. The country is under the control of state mafia and street mafia at the moment. Unless this system is broken, there can be no change. No government becomes democratic just because it has been elected democratically. And if there is poverty in the country then votes will be bought and sold.

We want a suspended bridge over the Karnafuly River in Chittagong. Because pillar bridge will pose a threat to the port. Small time terrorists are being killed in crossfire. But are the big fishes getting caught? Can RAB reach them?

**Majharul Haque Shah Chowdhury**  
Patriotic politicians are neglected today. There is no practice of democracy in the parties. Arms and money are becoming important in present day politics. Looters are controlling our politics. The nation has to be freed from this situation.

**Different opinions have been given here about businessmen joining politics.** I want to say a few things about it. It is a matter of transparency and accountability. It is not important what your profession is. You have to ensure whether you are honest or not. It is important to know what is the source of income of those who do full-time politics. There are many politicians who do not do anything. But they have house in Gulshan. Which one is better: to be a businessman before going to parliament, or be a businessman after going to parliament?

**Nurjahan Khan**  
It would not be right to contest elections under the present Election Commission. Both the parties have to give nomination to women in minimum 30 seats. Those who are connected with JMB will have to be resisted from contesting elections. Those who do not recognise our glorious Liberation War, they must not contest elections. We do not want to see our national flag in their cars. Politics of religion has to be banned and secularism has to be reinstated in the Constitution.

**Advocate Montosh Barua**  
People have to be made aware so that they elect honest and competent candidates. Those who have whitened their black money through paying tax have to be identified. The list of their name has to be published. And this discussion has to be spread throughout the villages.

**Selim Nazrul**  
The names of one and a half crore disabled persons are not included in the voter list. There was no interest to include their name while preparing the voter list. Through including their

names their basic rights have to be given recognition. Even if a party candidate is deemed incompetent, supporters cast vote for him/her because of party affiliation. I believe such discussion sessions are organised because of the fact that the administration is disabled.

**Debabriya Bhatyacharya**  
Doing business is a legally acceptable profession. When a businessman becomes a member of parliament some sort of interest factor begins to work. In this regard, in many countries there is rule that when a businessman becomes a lawmaker he or she has to declare the names of the business concerns where he or she has business interest. As a result, while making law, people are able to find out whether he or she has done it to safeguard personal business interest. So, a registrar of interest should be introduced in our country as well.

**Syed Golam Haider Mintu**  
State infrastructure has to be changed. Not only voter ID, identity card is required for every citizen.

**Mohammad Shahidul Alam**  
All state institutions including election commission and anticorruption commission have to be strengthened on the basis of national consensus.

**Sabiha Musa**  
What are the political leaders thinking about police atrocities on women during peaceful demonstrations?

**MA Mannan**  
There cannot be any state or society without politics. Politicians must be accountable. It is true that because of the sacrifices of the political workers this country has achieved freedom. But afterwards politics has gone from the hands of the politicians to other quarters. As a result, the continuity has been broken. The country was under military rule for a long time. But no such thing happened in India. In that country a strong democratic system is functional. There the electoral infrastructure is powerful. That is why the Election Commission has to be reformed. This will ensure progress.

There should be a system of asking questions to politicians. There cannot be any development without accountability. It would be possible to take our society through proper application of the existing laws. No special force is required for this. I have no objection to forming an elite force. But I do not support any killing outside the law. If a disease afflicts society then we have to identify the real cause and then uproot it. Temporary treatment will not work.

**Abdullah Al Noman**  
If social power cannot strengthen its position within politics and economy then often politicians in the developing countries cannot perform their responsibilities properly. They cannot go above greed and work. We could

not take the country where it was supposed to be since liberation. As a result there is a big gap between our expectation and achievement.

In parliamentary democracy, there will be a government, an opposition and a parliament. The government will have to be accountable, at the same time the opposition will also be accountable. All political parties will be accountable. If the civil society plays no role here then any government in power will face crisis. We shall not be able to reach the desired goal. That is why my proposal is, further strengthen the social power and uproot corruption and nepotism from all political parties. Side by side, ensure the responsibility of the civil society.

I agree that black money and criminalisation have made an inroad in politics. When we are in the opposition we talk about it strongly. When in government we do not talk about it so strongly. There should have been many more people's representatives in this discussion. Maybe the organisers could not invite all of them. But because of their absence this suspicion may arise whether CPD is promoting any political agenda? Personally I believe that it is not doing so. Since it is a good initiative, there should be an assimilation of all opinions and ideas. I hope CPD will be careful in the future about this.

When we place information on various issues, we should place only correct information. Otherwise it will create confusion in the minds of the people. There have been plenty of achievements in the country in the last 15 years. Instead of giving importance to what foreigners say, we should give emphasis on using our own resources for our development. At the same time we shall have to identify and remove the weaknesses in order to march forward.

We need honest and corruption free people in every sector. The institutional weaknesses in the country are not being exposed. If corruption at that level could be stopped then overall corruption rate in the country would diminish. Therefore, effective movement should be started against not only those in the political process but also against those who work at that level.

**Prof. Sikander Khan**  
In the first dialogue held in Dhaka Prof. Yunus had said that because of loyalty to the party people vote for whoever has been given nomination by the party without making any judgement. He had raised the question as to how long this system could be allowed to go on. This system creates the opportunity to get some illegal work done by that candidate because of his/her loyalty to the party. That is why we want to say, we must have the right to cast 'No' vote. After that dialogue

this has been the topic of discussion in many groups. I feel this is the true success of this initiative. Instead of sitting at home and lament, we should get together to express and exchange our opinions, and try to find ways as to how we can come out of this impasse. That would make our responsibilities seem lighter.

MA Mannan is present here. We have gone to the same school and are almost contemporaries. I know him quite closely. Abdullah Al Noman was my direct student. I had this feeling long before that some day these two would be ministers. That has come true. But they could not give as much as we had expected from them. My question is, though they are good

people, why couldn't they fulfill our expectation?  
Since political parties represent a large section of the people of the country, they are national institutions. But they are not interested to get registered. These institutions are being directed by politicians. Therefore, our appeal to politicians, do not give nomination to persons whom we shall not be able to accept. You should take good care of these national institutions.

As the president, I must thank you all for listening to the discussion with patience. I want to thank CPD, Prothom Alo, The Daily Star and Channel I.

### List of participants

1. Prof. Sikander Khan, (President) Economist
2. Matiur Rahman, editor, Prothom Alo
3. Prof. Alamgir Sirajuddin, former vice-chancellor, Chittagong University
4. Dr. Khurshid Jamil, general secretary, BMA, Chittagong District
5. Begum Mushtari Shafi, Women leader and regional convener, TIB
6. SM Nurul Haque, acting president, Chittagong Chambers of Commerce and Industry.
7. Advocate Khairul Islam, president Chittagong Lawyers Association.
8. Monowara Begum, Commissioner, Chittagong City Corporation.
9. Dr. Emran Hossain, Professor, Dept. of History, Chittagong University
10. Emdadul Haque Chowdhury, organising secretary, Peshajibi Sangram Parishad, Chittagong
11. Sumima Yasmin Sumi, joint editor Daily Azadi
12. Zia Haider, Professor (Retd), Dept. of Charukala, Chittagong University
13. Mahabub Ali, president, shippers council of Bangladesh
14. Jamal Nazrul Islam, Professor Emeritus, Chittagong University, Member Nagorik Committee-2006
15. Mujibur Rahman
16. Rana Dashgupta, Lawyer, Chittagong Lawyers association
17. Ali Ashraf, president, Engineers Institute of Bangladesh
18. Commodore AZ Nizam (Retd), Research Society of Bangladesh
19. Rehana Kabir Ranu, Commissioner, Chittagong City Corporation
20. Zerina Hossain, city planner, Odhakar, Chittagong
21. Abdullah Abu Sayeed, president, Bishwa Shahitya Kendro and co-convener Nagorik Committee-2006
22. Advocate Emdadul Islam, president, Gono Forum
23. Comrade Shah Alam, secretary, CPB, Chittagong district
24. Majharul Haque Shah Chowdhury, vice chairman, Jatiya Party
25. Shapon Sen, president, Gonorantri party
26. Pankaj Bhatyacharya, presidium member, Gono Forum
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30. Nurjahan Khan, president, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Chittagong
31. Neera, student, Chittagong University
32. Jahangir Alam, Prothom Alo Bandhu Shobha, Chittagong
33. Brigitte Dias, cultural activist and teacher
34. Sultan Mahmud, former chief engineer, Chittagong Port Authority
35. Advocate Montosh Barua, former general secretary, Chittagong District Lawyers Association
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40. Mohammad Ishaq, president, Bangladesh Newspapers Hawkers Association
41. Hossain Kabir, president and associate professor, Dept of public administration, Chittagong University
42. Shankar Prashad Dey, Lawyer
43. Sanjib Barua, private college teacher
44. Nurul Alam Masud, chief executive, participatory research and action network, Noakhali
45. Uttam Chowdhury, general secretary, Bangladesh College University Teachers Association, Chittagong
46. Delwar Majumder, member secretary, oil-gas-mineral resources and electricity and port protection national committee, Chittagong
47. Selim Nazrul, organiser of the disabled
48. Ahsan Ullah Chowdhury, political worker
49. Abdul Awal, chief executive, NRDS, Noakhali and president Supra-national committee

### List of participants

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51. Shamsul Alam Togor, deputy-executive director, Chandnaish Society
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54. Durjoy Dey
55. Akinchan Barua, volunteer, Janipop
56. Shakila, program associate, Janipop
57. Prof. Gazal Salehuddin, Chittagong University
58. Nazim-ul-Haquer, executive director, social upliftment foundation
59. Shahriar Hassan, literary editor, Prothom Alo Bondhu Shobha, Chittagong
60. Shahnewaj Riton, poet and journalist
61. Jubair Shikder, student leader
62. Adv. Abu Hanif, secretary, Workers Party, Chittagong City
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69. Adnan Mannan, student
70. Adv. Akhter Kabir Chowdhury, member secretary, Sujan
71. Syed Morshed Hossain, chairman, Onnesha
72. Omar Kaiser, journalist
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89. Nurul Amin Manik, NGO representative
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91. Javed Nazrul Islam, commissioner, Chittagong City Corporation
92. SM Abdul Nur, freedom fighter organiser
93. AMM Khairul Bari, student
94. MA Hannan, former minister
95. Abdullah Al Noman, minister, GoB

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