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# A setback to BNP

It is no doubt an irreparable and irreplaceable loss for the BNP to let Col. (ret'd) Oli go. The BNP committed a serious mistake by not addressing his grievances and not bringing him back into the party for which he was an invaluable asset from the beginning. The BNP incurred a similar loss in Badrudduza Choudhury, then in removing a competent and reputable Cabinet minister like Amir Khosru Choudhury, now again in Col. Oli. The loss of the latter (Col. Oli), who is Mr. Clean, is perhaps much more serious and costly, the reason being Col. Oli is a dynamic, formidable and charismatic leader who by virtue of his honesty and integrity and straight talk and heroic past proved himself essential and indispensable in the politics of Bangladesh. His loss is going to cost BNP immensely, which BNP will never be able to recover or overcome, and which BNP will soon deeply regret.

BNP should realise that its last five years is a record of more failures than successes which are more immediate and closer to the masses of power, water, fertiliser, suffering due to inadequate Hajj flights, collapsing Biman, widespread corruption everywhere and the intolerably high prices of necessary commodities, which by any account simply dwarfed and diminished the few scattered successes it may have had in some areas for a certain small quarter only. Despite the fact that the BNP-led front came to power with two-thirds majority, it miserably failed people's expectations while it was busy to serve its own material interest through rampant corruption.

BNP supporters like me are deeply embarrassed and disappointed at the failure of the party and now they are again disappointed at the painful loss of Col. Oli who is already on his way to a great success in forming an opposition party. How many more suicidal mistakes can BNP afford to make?

**Jalal Uddin Khan, One-e-mail**

The common people as well as people of all classes are anxiously watching the death of a beautiful nation. I don't understand why these people don't look at the mirror to see their own image. Well, when we observed some leaders left their party revolting against some disorder, some people praised it and some criticised it saying why did these so called honest leaders not express it before. Why now?

**Mohammad Masud Hossain Dipu**  
Lecturer, Inathganj College, Sylhet

By this time we know all about the governance and mismanagement of the present BNP-Jamaat combine. Our expectations from the next government which will hopefully not be

formed by the present 'duet singers' are quite high. Apart from the guidelines announced by Sheikh Hasina on 10 October, the followings points deserve consideration.

To ease the intolerable traffic jam of Dhaka city the plan for underground metro lines should be revived. The process initiated by the immediate past government was stalled by the PMO for reasons best known to the decision makers. The proposal should be immediately revived, agreement signed and work initiated. There is no alternative to underground train lines for easing traffic jams. All the big cities were developed in the same prescribed manner.

The corrupt politicians, party men, officials etc. should be rounded up, pressurized for a full confession of their misdeeds and be forced to refund at least 80% of the stolen money. Otherwise, they should face death penalty with

in the same manner.

Primary education should contain a subject called 'ethics'. It will imbibe the students with liberal ideas, teachings and values. This will make them more tolerant and respectful to all religions. This will bring qualitative and quantitative changes in our future generations.

Religion as a political tool should be banned.

Prices of essentials are to be brought to tolerable and rational level by destroying the syndicates. Traders should be taken into confidence.

Power generation situation has to be improved within one year.

Hope the leaders will rise to the occasion.

**SN Mamoon, Dhaka**

I have come to learn that 13 ruling party MPs and a minister are among 102 people who



ostracisation of other family members. A 'stolen money recovery authority' may be formed. It was quite successful in Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif and others had to refund a big chunk of stolen money to avail the opportunity of the safe passage to Saudi Arabia and other countries. It's govt. money and should be deposited to the exchequer. The money will be spent for developmental purposes.

The gangs of 'dacoits' should be rounded up and deported after full confession, recovery of stolen money. Lists of politicians who are criminals, anti-liberation first degree collaborators etc. should be made.

List of active members of the Jamaat, JMB, BNP hardliners etc should be drawn by appointing intelligence and local people at the ward, union, village levels.

Lists of other criminals should be prepared

have joined the newly formed Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). This is the best news coming from Bangladesh politics for a long time by any stretch of imagination. I am delighted to see that sensible deputies have decided to distance themselves from today's BNP a far cry from the principles of its founder President Ziaur Rahman wrought with corruption, nepotism and dictatorial dynastic philosophy.

It is a shame that today's BNP and AL leaders have lost sight of the vision of their respective founders and have started to treat our country as their private property. However, I am sceptical about whether the Bangladesh electorate has the sense to realize this. What we have in Bangladesh are two leaders who have thoroughly failed our country. I wonder when looters and plunderers will be exiled like

Mr. Thaksin Sinawatra, the deposed leader of Thailand. But I am certain that it will happen. The formation of LDP is a good sign to that end.

I have unconfirmed reports from Dhaka (since online Bangladesh newspapers are not being updated because of the Eid festivities) that the houses of those who have left BNP are being torched. AL has called for a siege of the capital because talks have broken down between the two main parties. These infantile tantrums only show the true colours of the mind-set of today's main-stream Bangladeshi political parties both of which have failed to demonstrate their duty to the country above their own greed for power. In the mean time, the common people of Bangladesh are held hostage to violence and suffering in silence.

I hope more sensible and honest people will have the courage to step out of these two

the following 10-point manifesto.

1. The party will disown all its student and youth wings.
2. Will not call any hartal / strike. (There can be a silent 'human chain' demonstration as a right to express opinions or to protest something.)
3. Separate judiciary from the executive.
4. Ensure justice for all.
5. Decentralize education and improve its quality.
6. Take steps to introduce moral and civic education, particularly at the primary and secondary levels.
7. Never politicize administration and other organisations and institutions.
8. Eliminate corruption.
9. Root out militancy.
10. Promote, protect and set up local industries.

from the leaders, this showdown of strength is fit for 'mastans', not political leaders, we hope they realise it and refrain from making this country a battleground.

**Nur Jahan, Chittagong**

I was really surprised that the Awami League had planned to hold the proposed meeting between Mr. Jaill and Mr. Bhuiyan at the residence of the American Ambassador. I am even more surprised that the American Ambassador agreed to offer the venue without the consent of the BNP Chairperson.

When the offer was made to Mr. Bhuiyan he did not say "yes" or "no". And then he held a press conference to condemn the idea and say "no". It is a little more than that. In this press conference he said that Mr. Jaill could "black-mail" him. In your column you have not made any mention about it. Everyone knows blackmailing is a serious crime and so this is a serious charge made against Mr. Jaill, a very senior politician. Is there really any substance to back Mr. Bhuiyan's accusation?

**Fayaz Khan, Eskaton, Dhaka**

In every discussion meeting or interview every leader of BNP tried to prove that Justice KM Hasan is a non-political person. But it is KM Hasan who could plead for his political neutrality. Whether he is politically biased or not it is totally up to him. None except me can say whether I am a political or apolitical person. When Mr. Hasan himself is silent about his political neutrality, how can a political party speak for him? Why do they (BNP leaders) advocate for Hasan's neutrality? So is there any extra-relationship between them? BNP's extra enthusiasm to prove Hasan's neutrality raises the question of their honesty.

It is not the sole duty of the BNP to appoint the chief of caretaker government it will be decided as per the constitution. The constitution opts for a neutral non-political caretaker government. But how could a government be neutral under a person who has political identity? It is also important to note that a person who is once political can never be apolitical or non-political.

**Zakir Hossain, Bezpara, Jessore**



dysfunctional dictatorial dynasties and give the electorate a badly needed break from the choice between two failed leaders.

**Shabbir A. Bashir, PhD, Vancouver, USA**

We know the rare breed our politicians are. We know them more than they know themselves, which they do not know. So, we know what they say and what they do is all for themselves, not for us the general public. Hence our great expectations now hinge on a new political party with a new manifesto. We have great people like the Nobel Laureate Professor Yunus. Why shouldn't we have a noble party for noble actions to save us, to save the nation? This is not just our wishful thinking we believe it with all our heart. The nation is eagerly waiting to see the birth of such a new political party (let's call it People Power) with

I promise I'll vote for this new party. And I'm sure the great majority will do the same.

**Professor Shamsul Hoque, One-e-mail**

The news of the Awami League and the BNP preparing for a showdown of strength made us very frightened. We have had enough of unrest; we won't be able to take anymore. Why this showdown, for whose benefit? The Awami League is prepared with sticks and oars; we don't know what BNP will be ready with to face it. They must shun this primitive attitude; it will only result in destruction of lives and destruction of government and private property.

What do the politicians take us for? A herd of cattle? Do they think this sort of actions will increase support for them? They are gravely mistaken, people expect rational behaviour



## Nuclear North Korea and America

North Korea apparently has become the 9th nuclear power. There is a doubt on whether their explosion was successful some believe the detonator made of conventional explosives exploded around the core, but failed to set off the nuclear fission. The real explosion happened outside N. Korea. America, Europe, Japan and even China have reacted sharply.

American media has portrayed this as acquiring of Nuke by a nation that is unstable and unpredictable. Unstable, probably. But when it comes to predictability, America's behaviour on nuclear issues is difficult to plot in a model: Iraq didn't have nuclear weapons or weapons programme. But America invaded them based on nuke programme that existed in their imagination and cooked intelligence.

India exploded real nuke and got rewarded with a deal for nuclear material and technology. Pakistan went nuclear, even exported the technology, but remained America's strong ally. America turns a blind eye to Israel's open secret nuclear arsenal. Iran, which refuses that it is making a bomb, regularly gets threat of sanction, military action, and regime change.

During Shah's time, America strongly advocated nuclear power for Iran so that it could free its oil for export. Now they say Iran doesn't need nuclear power because they have oil.

America refused to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the Senate, but expects other countries to abide by it.

With such an unpredictable enemy, no wonder North Korea wanted a deterrent nuclear arsenal. How unfortunate for the peace loving world!

**Ashish Ahsan, Uttara, Dhaka**

## Western devices and moon-sighting

If you want to know the time, you have to resort to the wristwatch made in some western country. If one desires to improve his sight, he has to take glasses and artificial lens made in the west. If one needs restoring his health he has to resort to medical tests carried out by the medical equipment coming from the west. If one wishes to undergo some surgery he has to go to a surgeon to accomplish the task with the help of the latest medical equipment of the west. If one desires speeding up his journey to perform the holy pilgrimage to Mecca the Glorious, he has to resort to air travel or sea travel carried out by a plane or a ship made in the west. If one likes expanding jihad he has to resort to weaponry of assortment developed by the west. If one wants to travel, he has to resort to motor-bike or other vehicles made by the west. If one chooses to make the mosque comfortable, he has to resort to the latest appliances of the west. It won't be wrong to say that almost nothing can be accomplished the best way without western gadgets & devices.

So why should we object to moon-sighting with the help of the latest equipment?  
**Aftab Alam Advocate**  
High Court, Swat

## Kuldip Nayar's article

This is in reference to Mr. Kuldip Nayar's article about incoherence of activities of the Indian Armed Forces during the Kargil war published in your daily on the 10th October 2006. I think we in Bangladesh have much to learn from that experience too. In Bangladesh, the Armed Forces have not grown in any balanced way. The army dominates all aspects of the nation dwarfing the other two services. During previous martial law regimes the Army developed a 'top heavy' organisation creating 'unique' rank structure in Bangladesh Armed Forces, where the Army has higher rank in all equal positions. My highlighting these points here is not to blame the army but to suggest to the national level leadership to study and develop 'Balanced Armed Forces' in Bangladesh which would be a coherent fighting force to reckon with.

Only the political leadership can make such changes.

**Reader**  
On e-mail

## The lost children

It is matter of great concern that lots of young boys and girls go missing for reasons unknown every now and then. The matter is unfortunately an age-old phenomenon in our society. Some are abducted, some are lost, and some yet go missing on personal account. The matter is evident in the daily newspapers and the electronic media as the concerned guardians report them with a fond hope of getting them back.

But the unfortunate reality is that they are lost forever.

Now the question is, where do these lost kids (at times little older ones) go? Who are the people that are behind this heinous crime? Are they some organised groups and if so why do the authorities fail to trace them?

This crucial point deserves special attention from the authorities as well as the NGOs.

**Rafiqul Islam Rime**  
Agrabad, Chittagong



Every Bangladeshi was overwhelmed with joy when the announcement came that Dr. Muhammad Yunus won the Nobel Peace Prize. We were also elated when another Bengali, though not a Bangladeshi, Professor Amartya Sen, received Nobel Prize in Economics after the great Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore. But Dr. Yunus is our own. He made his contributions for the uplift of millions of poor in Bangladesh and helped millions of others around the world. When I was the Bangladesh ambassador in Brazil not too long ago, I discovered that the average Brazilians knew only one Bangladeshi - Dr. Yunus. Well, you may call that a failure on the part of our diplomats but that was the fact!

We were profoundly elated with the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Dr. Yunus. Now the Nobel Laureate has caused a new excitement among us that he might enter politics and float a new political party. Personally, I wholeheartedly support and welcome the idea. Today we do not know whom to vote for because most MPs, ministers and many leading politicians dirtied their hands with looting of national resources. Black money rules politics and it has become synonymous with dirty business, corruption and crime.

Can Dr. Yunus show us the ray of hope? I believe he can. Unlike some renowned politicians who splintered from the main parties for one reason or the other, Dr. Yunus carries no stigma. After becoming a Nobel Laureate he is now as large as Bangladesh itself. Through his hard social work over the years, championing the cause of the poor through micro credit, Dr. Yunus has established grassroots level contacts with the people and he has the Grameen network. He did not do it to get votes. But now if he and his political party need support to save Bangladesh from the quagmire of dirty, corrupt and criminal politics, millions should come forward to support him. Will decent people, who shunned politics before, join his political party? I believe they will. There are honest businessmen, retired civil servants, academics, and professionals in many fields who would love to see a Bangladesh re-born free from corruption, crime and domination of black money. Let Dr. Yunus make us forget that we are now the No. 1 in the world as a corrupt country. His Nobel Peace Prize made us forget that momentarily. Now let us help him forget it permanently.

**Syed Noor Hossain**  
Former Ambassador, Dhaka

It was a shame to see our Finance Minister justifying how Dr. Yunus won his Nobel Prize (referring to the article published in The Daily Star on October 20 'Saifur critical of Grameen Bank').

Then let me take the chance here to congratulate Dr. Yunus for making us proud as a nation. I remember a few days ago I went to an open talk held in our university where Dr. Mahathir Mohammed was asked to give a speech. He mentioned a few times that he wanted to see a Nobel Prize winner here in Malaysia within 2020.

We have got that prize well before many other developing countries!  
**Mahmudur Rahman Erash**  
Faculty of Engineering and Technology  
Multimedia University  
Malaysia

## Nepal's future

After the historic revolution of Nepali people, Nepal has landed into a different ground. Monarchy has already ended. Now the future of Nepali people is in the politicians' hands.

However, even six months after the revolution it is not clear whether the people of Nepal will be able to enjoy the fruits of their great achievement.

We want to see a happy and prosperous Nepal.

**Mohammad Raja**  
Gono Bishwabidyalay  
Gono Sasthya Kendra  
Savar, Dhaka



## Attention: drama scriptwriters

I currently reside in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. You must be wondering, what my purpose of writing to you is. Before I go on further, I will introduce myself to you briefly. I can proudly say that I was born in Bangladesh, but left the country at the age of nine months for Germany and thereafter we migrated to Canada. I am a Canadian citizen. I have completed my education in French, and I speak 5 languages. At the moment I work in a pharmaceutical

company. My message actually overlooks mainly how Bengali dramas are used to portray the society today and what the individuals playing the roles are going through. The reason why I chose Bengali dramas is because here abroad that is the only way we can get close to our tradition, social and moral values, and that is how we can relate to our culture. I have been to Bangladesh only three times in my life, that is not enough to know our culture. What I would like to know is how could I get in touch with directors and scriptwriters in Bangladesh. I am fed

up with the stories that just evolve around love, we have a lot to learn from life and there are plenty of real life stories in my hat. Actually, we can't relate to what is being portrayed.

I hope that you do understand my concerns. I would really like to be able to express my feelings, my emotions, my ideologies and what we went through growing up in a foreign country where the social norms and values are totally different. I am confident that you can help me getting through some scriptwriters or directors.  
**Laila Kabir, On e-mail**