

Use of black money in election must be prevented

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Kazi Jainul Abedin

Besides nominating honest and competent candidates for 2007 elections, the Election Commission needs a total overhauling. We do not believe that under the present chief election commissioner a free and fair election will be possible. The caretaker government system also needs reforms. In 2021 I do not want to see unified system of education. In your No. 12 proposal, the secular education is acceptable. But if all the educational institutes are not nationalised then it would not be possible to implement discrimination-free education system.

At present we do not see meritorious students coming from village or district level. Nowadays, only students of famous educational institutes are doing better results. Teachers in district towns cannot complete the full course. I got letter marks in matriculation examination but I could not solve a math of my grandson. That means present courses have changed drastically. If this goes on then the children of the poor villagers will not be able to go up in life. I request you to include these in your recommendations.

Khondoker Saidur Rahim Bitul

In Bangladesh, for the sake of democracy what is needed is national consensus. If the political parties do not reach a consensus, then Prothom Alo, CPD, The Daily Star or civil society will not be able to force anything on them. It is for the interest of democracy that Awami League and BNP need to reach a consensus. Here the administration is used to rig votes. In order to stop this practice, the political parties will have to have minimum honesty and principles. The Election Commission must have the power to transfer officials from election-sensitive positions who have been given posting by the present government in power.

The Bangladesh of 2021 shall be one having no 5th, 7th and 8th amendments. It shall be a secular Bangladesh on the basis of the constitution of 1972.

Monoj Shaha

I am proposing some additions. I want to propose the word 'secular' here. Because the connotation of the words 'secular' and 'noncommunal' are different. I propose to write 'classless social system'. The number three point is, here it is written: 'Language and cultural development and equal rights of the minority adibashis.' But one thing is probably missing here. Adibashi and tribal is not the same thing. That is why adibashi and tribal should be written together. The fifth point about hartal may encourage the vested groups. I request you to phrase it differently. As the sixth point, instead of representative parliament, a parliament composed of representatives from various professional groups has to be developed.

In the ninth point, local government organisation has to be changed into autonomous organisation. Because of absence of autonomy, the elected local government representatives are treated as servants of the administration.

Kazi Humayun Kabir

Advocate Fazlul Haque has said some sensible things here. In 1991 I had told him that he could get BNP nomination in Madaripur-2 seat. It was discussed in the highest forum. But he did not agree. He is an honest person but he did not take part in the election. If honest people do not want to take part in elections then how will you bring about changes?

People's dream will be reflected in the next election. Barrel of guns is the source of all power is an obsolete phrase. Some adverse remarks have been passed here about politicians. I feel all of them are not true. We do politics for the welfare of the people. Those who do politics for personal benefit stay at the top. In the present political arena, we see dominating role of some moneyed people. Majority of the people do not want to listen to the people of civil society. They listen to the rich people and those having arms. Real politicians have not acquired black money or have arms. I feel the present crisis can be solved through discussion. If the Election Commission becomes strong then there would be no need for caretaker government.

Rafiquzzaman Laek

Regarding reforms of the electoral system, opposition parties have submitted proposal and the government has also talked about holding discussion. But today, we see no discourse on this issue. But it is important that we have one. Common people are gradually drifting away from politics.

There is a process of depoliticisation. In this initiative if more people are not involved then this will also become a part of that depoliticisation process. The names of owners of black money and corrupt people have to be made public. The nation cannot be salvaged only with election related dialogue. The day-to-day struggle of the people must also come into focus.

Adv. Syed Modarres Ali Isa

There are many people from CPD here who want accountability in democratic system of governance. At the same time some of them were

connected with the trump card programme of the general secretary of a political party for toppling a democratic government. Therefore, we as political workers may have the questions in our minds as to what is their role in the democratic system of governance. I have criticised them but that does not mean we do not endorse their views. We as political workers question as to where would their role end finally. Because of absence of political character, and because of the feeling of distrust and enmity among the ruling party and opposition, they do not make public the faults even after

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holding discussions in the parliamentary committees. CPD, Prothom Alo, The Daily Star and Channel-i could let the people know the faults. We want to assist you but are you beyond criticism? Cleverly you are putting all the blames on the political parties. At the same time you accept the fact that it was political parties that took part in our glorious Liberation War. Personally I believe that your initiative in the present context of our politics is correct. But my question is how long this initiative will last. If it is being done at someone's direction then it will end soon. But if it is coming from the heart then you will be doing something worthwhile.

Mohammad Azizul Haque Khan

So long I have had the idea that no one thinks about this country. But today after listening to you all, I am convinced that you do think about your country. Unless this thinking turns into action it will have no meaning. When I see the word 'non-political' beside the name of an organisation I get perturbed. Because it is something without which a country cannot move ahead. Such feeling has grown into people because of the pollution in politics. If one is involved in politics, people say he is doing something bad. It is because of the deeds of some politicians.

Prof. ANM Abdus Sobhan

The qualitative changes in politics have to come from the major two political parties. The progressive, conscious, honest and decent people within the party will have to exert pressure. The duty of the civil society, media and intellectuals is to bring this out and place it before the people, create awareness among them so that they may create pressure on the government. One has to maintain neutrality to criticise a political party or the government. It has to be constructive criticism. If criticism tilts to one side then people will become confused. If we know that a particular intellectual belongs to Awami League or BNP or the Communist Party then that will not be a problem. But if that intellectual appears on certain occasions only and talks one sided then that will be questioned. I would like to ask CPD and civil society to maintain neutrality when you will talk. Then we shall have no suspicion. It is important to study past political history. Deputy Speaker Shahed Ali had died when chairs were thrown at him. That had paved the way for Ayub Khan to seize power. It took ten years of movement to oust him. After Ziaur Rahman was assassinated Ershad had seized power. There was a nine-year movement to oust him. Now BNP and Awami League are pulling Ershad from two sides. Then how can we say that there was any qualitative change in politics? Until there will be qualitative changes in politics, we shall not go anywhere.