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# Τοπ τωο πολιτιχιανς



For many years you are the two most important politicians who are shaping the fate of Bangladesh and its people. This is because you are the leaders of the two biggest political parties that are governing Bangladesh by rotation. If there is anything good the credit goes to you and vice versa. And there is no sign that your leadership will end in near future. The Almighty has given you the greatest opportunity to do some good for millions of people of this poor country to test you how well you use that opportunity. You can ask yourselves how successful you are after considering the following facts:

the people can expect from such leaders who do not even talk to each other to find out the ways of solving the problems of the country? If you look at our neighbour you will find that all the political parties there speak in one voice concerning the important issues & foreign policy. Please learn from them and act accordingly.

You are always talking about democracy and leaving no stone unturned to establish democracy in Bangladesh. But you are not practicing the same in your parties. First you should elect (not select) the leaders of your parties by free and fair election and then try to implement the democratic process at the national level. Your autocratic system in your

party is now so deep rooted that no one will dare to come forward to challenge your leadership. So first arrange a secret yes / no vote on your leadership. If party members are allowed to freely exercise their voting right, you may experience a surprise outcome. Depending on the result, you can arrange another general election in your parties to elect the party chief and other office bearers.

Here I would like to quote a few lines from a "Victory Day" article published in The Daily Star where the columnist wrote, "We now need our new generations to regain the lost independence and victory from the clutches of the corrupt politicians through a demo-

cratic movement so vigorous that it shakes the ground under the feet of the evil ones. The proposed movement will take honest people and visionary leaders with intellectual resources, democratic values and creative ideas to overcome the obstacles created by the current brand of selfish politicians with vested interests and ulterior motives." Just ask yourselves whether you have these leadership qualities.

The nation will keep you in good memory if you spare its people from your autocratic leadership and the time for your decisive role is running out.

**Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque**  
Khalishpur, Khulna

## Modern life

A terrible irony of modern world is that while millions of people are trying desperately to get enough to eat and face illness or death from malnourishment there are millions of others who are trying just as desperately to eat less and avoid illness or death from overeating. That is how you find the dieticians advising the affluent with diet charts. The gyms with all sorts of equipments for body toning and an in-house dietician and advisor are thriving on advising people how to be fit and trim.

Considering the above marketers must be alert enough to introduce food supplements or exercise equipments to cater to this affluent segment of society. Their terminology and differentiation must look genuine for the consumer so that the products are used with customer confidence.

It is tough call for marketers because most profitable food lines have tended to be the most highly processed and least healthy. But as prosperity and awareness increase consumers and public authorities are looking for foods that combine immediate sensual pleasure with long-term benefits.

There is a saying "there never has been —there is not now— and there never will be any boss but the customer. He is the one boss you must please. He buys your home, your cloths your cars; He paid for your vacation and puts your children through school. He will give you every promotion you will ever obtain during your lifetime ---- and he will discharge you if you displease him. Everything depends on how you treat this boss

**Abdullah Al Mazid, On e-mail**

## Neglected freedom fighter

My father was a Freedom Fighter. He fought for Bangladesh against Pakistan in 1971. He died on 26 May 2003. After his death we have received state honour (Rastrio Marjada) from Bangladesh police. The local newspapers in Sylhet also published that news. We have got two certificates, one from Bangladesh Armed Forces and the other is from sub-sector commander, both were issued in January 1972. In October 2000 my father's name was published in Mukti Barta & his Mukti No-0603020409. But his name, Moslem Khalifa, is not included in Bangladesh Gadget and we have not received any certificate from the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Only for that we went from door to door but we did not get any response anywhere. But we have got enough document to prove that my father was a genuine freedom fighter.

We appeal to the authorities concerned to look into the matter.

**Nur Mohammad**  
Shamimabad R/A, Kanishail Road, Sylhet

## Campus situation

These days we are observing that Dhaka University & other public universities remain closed for political violence. I request the government to deploy the army on the campus and all the residential halls, so that the universities can function smoothly.

**Astudent**  
Dhaka University

## Deployment of army

Recently I have noticed some opinions of readers in DS regarding the deployment of army in the streets. Most of them have welcome the CG's decision. Well, I know our troops are for ensuring us the best security. But such deployment of the army is the last thing that a democracy should resort to.

**Golam Rosul Maruf**  
University of Dhaka

## Lata and Lee!

Australian fast bawler Brett Lee sang a brilliant song with legendary singer Lata Mangeskar recently! It was amazing to listen to the duet, as the song was a beautiful mix of English and Hindi, and Brett Lee sang with such spontaneity that he did never seem to be an amateur! On the whole, it was a very refreshing rendition by the two celebrities from two different disciplines and the very same point reiterates the fact that a genius is always a genius.

**Rafiqul Islam Rime**  
Agrabad, Chittagong

## Voter list & journalism

After reading the recent articles regarding the voter list, I think it's time for all of us to take a breath and look back. I regularly watch television and saw the press conference of Owen Lippert. The thing that I noticed is that he and others were very upbeat about their findings. Actually I was very happy too. One of the reasons for today's political turmoil is the voter list prepared under MA Aziz. Now it should be a time of relief for both AL and BNP that there was no fabrication or ill intention found in the voter list. Both parties should be happy and relieved just like us the citizens. Duplication due to migration is a problem even in the USA and other developed countries. In the last elections here

in the States there were a lot of complaints for voting irregularities. So it's nothing new in Bangladesh or any other country. The encouraging thing is that it was not a planned voter list prepared for manipulation. Up to this everything looked fine but then the next day I read the online newspapers and was totally shocked. Almost everybody had headlines saying "NDI confirmed that there were 1.22 crore fake/false voters in the voter list." This was really not good journalism. Journalists always tell the politicians how to behave and how to tolerate each other but when it comes to themselves some don't think they have the equal responsibility to show restraint. Rather than focusing on how to correct the duplication and praising the EC for not providing a fabricated voter list almost all newspapers focused on portraying it negatively. And that's the reason the next day the US ambassador and others had to clarify the findings again.

I was expecting an editorial regarding this but never saw one. Just like the politicians in our country our journalists also can't admit their mistakes. We always tell both the parties to work together and be social to each other but I think we also have a responsibility as citizens to not always fan the differences. Some newspapers and TV channels are doing it regularly. They are fanning the differences. Journalists have a responsibility to be cautious and prudent at this vulnerable time of our country. Let's put the positive important things ahead and negative unimportant things behind so that we as a nation can go ahead.

One other thing I have to mention is that we have to find a way to do some investigative journalism. I as a citizen don't want NDI to come and tell us that our voter list is correct or incorrect. The research that they did can be done by us. I have nothing against NDI or foreign agencies doing it but we should have an independent non-political mechanism to check our voter list.

I really hope that the updated voter list and EC reconstitution will pave the way for a free and fair election in the coming months. I just pray to everyone to focus on the positives.

**Saif, On e-mail**

## To the journalists...

With my best regards to all the journalists, I would like to write a few words to them. Recently the journalists of different media are playing a very active role regarding the political issues. All the journalists seem to be fighting to hold their respective places and ask questions at the same time. They try to follow the rule "Survival of the fittest".

**S G M Tareq-Bin-Ali**  
North South University  
Banani, Dhaka

## Unsolicited advice

Recently, there have been scores of envoys and emissaries from abroad to render unsolicited advice to us on the current political situation; such as, what we should do and what we should not do etc. Even recently a foreign visitor has threatened to withdraw the international peace keeping facility now provided by the UN to Bangladesh, if the army steps in to quell the situation. It seems the foreigners are taking advantage of the differences between the political parties and trying to poke their noses in our internal affairs to fish in the troubled water for their ulterior motives. The people of Bangladesh maintain the Armed Forces out of the taxpayers' money to save the country, if the need arises; from the external as well as any internal threats. NOT for participation in any international peace keeping force! The interested quarters now seem more concerned about protection of the so called democracy and constitution only. But no one is concerned or even thinking of the country itself which is being destroyed in the process. The question of protection of democracy or the constitution arise only when the country survives. If the country remains constantly under turmoil, its economic backbone will be crushed and the country will never be able to stand on its own feet, thereby making it vulnerable to civil war like African countries.

Moreover, it will not be able to make any progress rendering the country an "unworkable" one, paving the way for foreign intervention. Therefore, my advice to our so-called well-wishers is: please leave us alone and mind your own business. We will decide what action is best needed for the country at the moment. We have the capacity to solve our problems and the people of this country will not hesitate to take, as they took earlier also, whatever action is required to save the country, this time from the clutches of the power hungry politicians who, to safeguard their selfish party interests over the national interest, are now out even to destroy the country itself.

**MA Hoque, On e-mail**

# Losing strategy

If we revisit our history we will certainly see that every political party in power strongly believes that they must have "special arrangements" to make sure that their return to power through election is guaranteed because no one is willing to remain outside power. Unfortunately, the reality is that those "special arrangements" always turn out to be the chief causes of losing the election. Major political parties, dedicated to establishing democracy as they claim, have been committing the same blunder as we noticed in the recent times. It is generally said that we forget things very easily but for the sake of moving forward we should not forget everything. Because, foundation of the future is chiefly laid down based on past experience. Readers, please recall the misdeeds of political parties from your memory in order to take the correct decision.

Let me focus on the prevailing "blame and counter blame"

game among the political parties. If we assume that blames are not true, it means they are lying and not eligible for getting votes. On the other hand, if we assume that blames are true, it means they are defaulter/criminal/corrupt, in that case also they are not eligible for getting votes, moreover, they should be liable to punishment as per law. Think for a while, these people come to power again and again and are fostering democracy! Where is the reflection of the essence of democracy "Govt. by the people, for the people, of the people"?

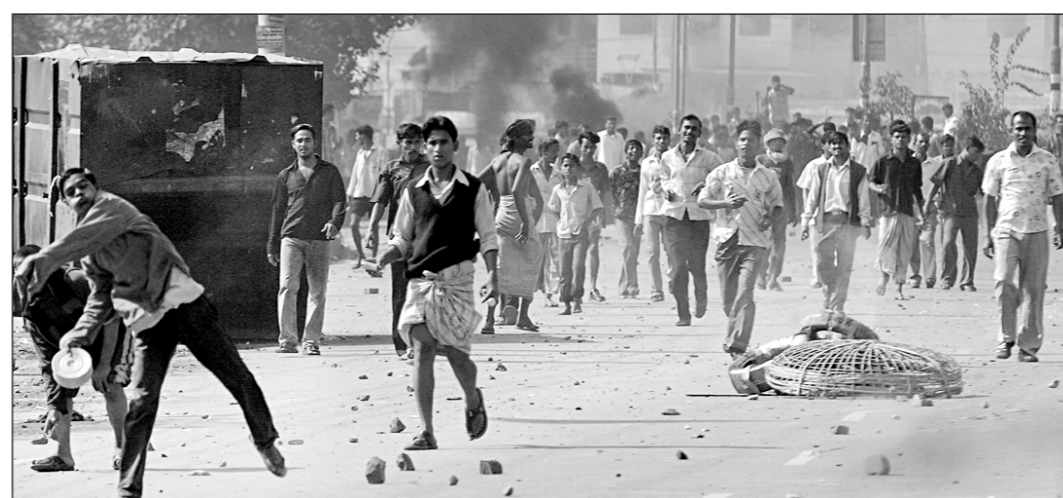
There is a funny culture in our society where we, the educated people, often try to portrait the character of politicians the way we find it convenient to create an impression that "X" is better than "Y" if we like "X" or the other way around. Whereas, it will be very difficult to find out a single politician who is not involved in the filthy activities like corruption, nepotism,

profiteering, exploitation of public assets, violation of human rights etc, regardless of political affiliation.

Surprisingly, major political parties (both major alliances) are wasting time to implement the most popular commitments i.e. (a) establishment and functioning of "Anti Corruption Commission" and (b) "Separation of judiciary from the administration". But why? Is it the common agenda of the major political parties that they will continue to enjoy the fruits (?) of misuse of power in the absence of proper functioning of ACC and separation of judiciary from the administration!! How long?

My appeal to all concerned: let us think properly, react properly and act properly without any prejudice and contribute in mobilizing public opinion accordingly. Otherwise, the next generation will not forgive us for our failure.

Finally, can we expect that the next elected government will rule the country in a proper



manner (disregarding previously practiced "special arrangements"), which will eventually increase the possibility of winning the hearts of the general people and thereby winning the election?

**Reader**  
One-mail

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The Daily Star recently reported "The Awami League (AL) that has almost finalised its own candidates starts negotiations today with its allies over seat-sharing for the election..." that "AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader told The Daily Star that his party is ready to leave at least 80 seats for their allies and like-minded parties..." and that "The JP-Ershad that had earlier sought a total of 72 seats might be finally given between 45 and 50 seats..."

In the past I have questioned the need, at this point in time of our "democracy", to have a caretaker government, and voiced that it was because of

each party's mistrust of fairness of elections and lack of faith in one party turning over the reins of government to the next government (led by an opposing party). And I've questioned why each government feels that under a parliamentary system (in which a party can call for new election) they must remain in office until the last moment as part of peoples' mandate, when they can, if they have confidence in their government, can hold a new election early and start the five-year period again.

But what I fail to understand now is the planning, before elections, for the sharing of seats in parliament. One would think that if a party had confidence in itself, and could field candidates for each constituency, it would field them, it would have the party's candidates run for office, and then, after the election, the leading party would put together its coalition. Not before.

If the Awami League, or any other party, believed its candidates were the best candidates, a belief it should have, then it should run candidates in as many constituencies as possible, and if it wins an outright plurality (more than half the votes cast), it doesn't need to build a coalition. Or, if it feels that it needs a coalition of other parties in advance of the election, then it should bring those candidates and those parties into a combined party.

Run for office. Run your own candidates. If you win a plurality of seats in parliament, congratulations, you won control of parliament. If you win a majority of seats in parliament, then build your coalition with parties that have won seats and offer positions in the coalition government.

**M.M. Haque**  
On e-mail

