

Politics and Economy: Drop the Catch, Lose the Match!

The government, seemingly, chose a confrontational route to ensure its 'peaceful existence' in power. Already, a number of political leaders and activists have been arrested and many more are reported to be in the list. These activities might result in a chain of reactions which could further sicken the economy.

Thank God for Iztema

As expected, the combined opposition has given its ultimate programme. It will start its indefinite 'non-cooperation' movement till the fall of what it calls 'the illegal government'. This is the most direct challenge to the BNP government that the opposition has given so far.

The question is, why has it come to such a pass? Why is it that the two camps, both professing to adhere to democratic norms, have come to a state where one talks in the language of threat and ultimatum, and the other in that of political repression?

So what do we do now? Thank God for the Iztema of the Tabliq Jamaat. It has given us the much needed respite. Under no circumstances should this opportunity be lost.

A Dangerous Crime

The BTV screen was an unbelievable sight at Ten on both Wednesday and Thursday night. What the characters were reading out was supposed to be news.

The rather fair record of this government's press freedom performance has been more than reversed and indeed blackened by its irresponsible abuse of the electronic media.

What radio and TV — mainly the latter, have been doing specially after the coming of the government versus the rest politics, has surpassed all past records of partisan bias.

But worse happened on Wednesday and Thursday. There was not a word on either the Chittagong or the Narayanganj situation.

Fire at Mohammadpur

Once again a shanty town has been razed to the ground, making thousands of slum dwellers homeless. The recent spate of fires in the city slums point to the extreme vulnerability of the city's poor to such accidents.

Suspicion has also been expressed about possible arson for possession of the prime government property on which the Mohammadpur slum was located. This calls for a thorough police investigation.

AVAILABLE reports on the economic events clearly point to the sordid fact that the economy is kneeling on account of the prolonged political crisis.

Only the garments? The RMG episode is just the tip of the iceberg. In fact, all organised sectors of the country have already started to pay heavy tolls on account of the current political impasse.

It is what amongst us is fast becoming a normal conversation. A friend of mine who has been back in the country for the last five years was talking about the hurdles that faced him everyday of his working life.

Some of us optimists believe that the politicians (all of them) will soon screw back their heads in the right direction. Maybe, hope against all hope, they will understand that closing down the country for days at the end does not actually help the nation.

Frustration about life here in Bangladesh is turning away bright young talents that were actually planning to come back and settle here after being educated in premiere institutes of the West.

Most of the set, I am talking about, have gone into banking. They with their fancy MBAs and business degrees find that they cannot use them here.

Between democracy and the devils

Sir, While watching the BBC telecast on February 2 in the afternoon, I came across Mr Mahfuz Anam's short interview given to Anir R Galpin of the BBC.

Answers to all the above questions will definitely be negative. 1) How can a government or any government in the world function properly and demonstrate its very best, if it is threatened by the jealous opposition with agitation and ouster just after its inauguration?

Farmers in northern districts expect a good go with boro production this season to offset the casualty incurred in last season production.

The nature and depth of the on-going political crisis, reportedly, forced a shift of the date for aid consortium meet to be held in Paris.

Hard hit are also the domestic resource mobilization efforts. The major source of revenue, customs duties, remained (and possibly would continue to be so during the last quarter of the fiscal year) sluggish on account of lower demand for imports.

The macro economic indicators, after few years of display of good shots, have started to pinch back on the economy.

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Beneath the Surface

by Abdul Bayes

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Land of Dreams

by Nazim Farhan Chowdhury

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OPINION

The Internet: Is Bangladesh Ready?

Kazi Obedul Haque

The Daily Star has been plugging computers (no pun intended) for quite some time now. Of late, as is evidenced by the entire page you devote to the newsgroup that is so anomalously named Soc.Culture.Bangladesh, you have started promoting the Internet.

policy-makers should realize that even without major picketing, the non-cooperation call of the opposition was a major success.

It is, perhaps, possible for the government to stay in power by using force. But this time its political power may not inject any power in the country's economic wheels.

We, therefore, urge upon the ruling party not to take a hard line. The 15th February election results do not seem to empower it to do so.

Web, is communicated through the medium of the English language.

We in Bangladesh have, over a short period of the last ten years or so, made sure that the English language is a lost art. Even in the universities and in such professions as the Law, where one would have thought English is still needed, this indispensable language of international exchange is confined to a few small corners.