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DHAKA WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 1996

The Daily Star 5

OPINION SURVEY ON THE FORTHCOMING BANGLADESH ELECTIONS 1st UPDATE

Manir
manir@ncds.ani.edu.au
Australia:

I want to mention at the start that this survey is conducted on a pool of non-voters. As per Bangladesh law people not residing in Bangladesh are not voters. Moreover, many of us don't have real touch with the voters, so this survey may not in any way reflect the true voting pattern that might take place in June 1996.

My guess is primarily based on last election held in 1991.

I think AL will be the biggest party in popular vote like last election. They may get around 40% (in 1991 this figure was 38%) while BNP may get around 30%. I still think BNP and JI may have some sort of election friendship against AL and so the parliament seats may not reflect above pattern. The final outcome may be something like:

AL- 120, BNP-100, JP-50, JI -10, Independent and others-20

This will result in a hung parliament. BNP may try to form a coalition with JP. If that is done, Ershad will be released and soon after that another election will become necessary.

In the alternative, if AL and JP form a coalition, Ershad will be released but the AL govt will survive since the reserved female MPs will make their number of seats sufficient to have majority in the Parliament.

Zakirul Kabir
w00u7@acad1.unbsj.ca
Canada:

And my prediction is:
BNP: 155; AL: 80; JP: 30; JI: 12; OTHERS: 23; Total: 300.

Zamil Rahman
zrahman@topaz.cqu.edu.au
Australia:

You are correct in figure but you need to only one change.

Look what will be the result:
BNP: 80; AL: 155; JP: 30; JI: 12; OTHERS: 23; Total: 300.

Asif Saleh
asaleh@eos.ncsu.edu
USA:

My prediction:

BNP: 110; AL: 85; JP: 70; JI: 20; other 15
Total: 300

Shah Rahman
srahman@sf1.gmu.edu
USA:

I think Jatio Party will become a key player and My distribution is: BNP: 125; AL: 105; JP: 60; IND: 8; JI: 2; Total: 300

So JP will play a major role in forming the government.

I say JP (Ershad) 60%; BNP 20%; AL + Others 20%. That is if it is not rigged.

Mahmood Hassan
hassan@kenroku.ipc.kanazawa-u.ac.jp
Japan:

Let there be LIGHT!!
Sleep in peace in the paradise of your own.

The Only Positive point if there is: The image of Fight Between 2 rival politicians. A man can easily draw attention. But Ershad??
NO NO NO

Imtiaz Kabir
imtiaz@cix.compulink.co.uk
UK:

To all in SCB:
As promised in my original message "OPINION SURVEY OF FORTHCOMING BANGLADESH ELECTIONS", I am providing the first update on the forecasts received by me so far.

I have trawled through the conference messages on the subject (both attached to my original message as well as independent ones on the same subject) and also those which were mailed direct to my address.

So folks these are the first results in percentages (but please sending them - those of you who have not contributed already):

BNP 35.73%, AL 31.90%, JP 22.39%, JI 4.57%, Others 5.41%.

As you may have noticed, I have not contributed myself to this debate. This is deliberate! However, my comments on the forecasts received so far are as follows:

Despite individual bias feeding through, the collective total is acquiring a realistic shape. Whilst, I have no problem with JI receiving only 4.57%, I think most of you are underestimating their support.

DEMOCRACIES:
A2: To take care of the force that forced them to agree.
A3: Damn bureaucrats!
A4: Khaleda Zia at last decided to complete her HSC part time.

Q: Why Feb. 15 election will be a historic milestone in Bangladesh politics?
A1: It was the first democratic election in Bangladesh. No? Damn!!
A2: It made BNP realize that they did not have the mandate to take care of Bangladesh the way they did for the last two years.
A3: No single party in the history of Bangladesh (make it world), won ALL the seats in parliament before Feb 15.

Q: Why did AL make ties with JI to overthrow BNP?
A1: Enemy's enemy is friend.
A2: They got a chance to sleep with BNP's ex-lover.
A3: LOVE IS BLIND!!

Q: Why did BNP break up with JI in 1994?
A1: Magura election?
A2: They did not know that JI will fall in love with AL.
A3: There is a thin line between LOVE and HATE. I guess it toooooo thin in this case.

Q: Why hartals still work in Bangladesh?
A1: that's the only democratic tool that oppositions have to make an argument with any government.
A2: Who said hartals work. It is bureaucrats who work (at last).
A3: People get a chance to see Indian movie in VCR at home.

Q: Why was Hasina so adamant to bring down Khaleda's govt?
A1: She wanted to be atleast the second woman prime minister of Bangladesh. Damn! first one was missed!!
A2: Wanted to avoid the hat-trick of becoming the opposition leader.
A3: Personal rivalry between Hasina and Khaleda.

The articles, or "posts" (to use Internet parlance) published in this page come from the Bangladesh Internet news group called "soc.culture.bangladesh," or SCB. In this newsgroup, Internet users from around the world, mostly Bangalees, discuss issues relevant to Bangladesh. In "Live from the Internet" the Daily Star reprints these posts verbatim (complete with English language errors) - just as they would appear on your computer screen. They have only been edited for size and relevance to the subject matter.

A speech and the "seeds of instability"

This thread is based on a news from The Janomot, a Bengali news weekly, published from LONDON (4th- 11th April, 1996)

Saiful Haque
<unknown>:

This following News article reflects the personal thoughts of the editor of "The Janomot" and also the colorful imaginations of M. Younus. Sorry for not buying this cheap story.

M. Younus
my10002@hermes.cam.ac.uk
UK:

Dhaka, 1 April, 1996.
Indecent Remark of Fazlul Haq Milon, President, Jatiatabadi Chatra Dal (JCD), (Student wing of BNP). "He who could teach Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir for life will be the great leader of JCD".

Until we get rid of our prejudice from our mind and start respecting different opinion from ours, no God will give us better leaders we all cry for to take us to the next century. Because, the leaders of a nation reflect the people of the nation.

--Moazzem Hossain, USA

To Drama Actress Tarana Halim: "You will not be able to walk in the street wearing shari! Your shari will be taken off wherever we find you! You will not be able to survive with honour".

Moazzem Hossain
moazzem@compass-da.com
USA:

You are free to buy anything you like, but may I ask you your thought the editorial and comments to be cheap. Do you have anything that suggests otherwise? The news about the attack on Dr. Mohiuddin Khan came to this very newsgroup. We all blame the oppositions for the hartals and destructions of last two years and give credit to the oppositions for Khaleda Zia's fall. Was it really the oppositions' hartals that put an end to Khaleda's rule?

Or was it the rebellion led by Dr. Mohiuddin Khan that was the ultimate reason for Khaleda Zia's fall? Did Khaleda Zia call for revenge in a huge public rally? We all know about all these news? Are you suggesting all these to be false? Do you have anything to substantiate your claim? Do you think Fazlul Haq Milon cannot follow Khaleda Zia's call for revenge against that force that brought an end to Khaleda's rule?

If you do not have any answer to these, then I should say that you are saying the editorial and comments cheap because it criticizes BNP. No constitutional amendment taking any side? Of course some netters do, though there are lots of polarized posting now-a-days. I hope, SCB netters will show more unpolarized views in their posting which might create a significant effect on country netter/reader back home. I also hope that in future our great leaders will think hard before the deliver their such great lectures (The opinion is mine only)

M. Younus, UK: He also made obscene comment on Kabir Sirwar (film actress) and Ramandu Mojumder (drama artist).

It is worth to mention that these people of different professions were in favour of Caretaker Government.

Mr. Milon was addressing a rally of JCD in Dhaka University.

K.M. Maniruzzaman
manir@okabe.t.u-tokyo.ac.jp
manir@asami.t.u-tokyo.ac.jp
Japan:

I wasn't aware that Ramendu Majumder had gone through such a major operation. Or did it happen naturally, as it did in the case of the Rajshahi University student years ago.

M. Younus, UK: The Reply of Dr. Alamgir: "BNP's corruption during last five years will be disclosed as written document"

K.M. Maniruzzaman, Japan: An honest government in Bangladesh seems to be something like a shonar pathor bati (oxymoron). But since when are civil servants allowed to make political statements like that? The whole manner in which the bureaucrats paraded to the "Janatar Mancha" and announced their solidarity might prove to be the seed of future turmoil and instability

I agree fully with your last statement. I am somewhat puzzled by the lack of comprehension on the part of the best of our elite of the value of the separation of institutions. We all understand and fully support the separation of the

We all understand and fully support the separation of the executive and the judicial branches of government. I am sure the bureaucrats who decided to take a political stance also support this separation.

--Mohammad Hanuzzaman, USA

Shoumyo Dasgupta
TXD111@psuwm.psu.edu
USA:

While I am reminding some of the readers from West Bengal about some magazines we all shared when we were little, I would also request our Bangladeshi nettor friends to enlighten us about the magazines you grew up with.

1. Shuktara : Remember Handa-Bhonda and Bantul the Great?
2. Kishore Bharati : Nontey-Phontey ? Dinesh Chandra Bandopadhyay's series on Runu ? I remember a dialogue which was hilarious, stated about this friend (?) of Runu, by his father : " O halay za koy, tar soiddo-anna misa kotha".
3. Tepantor : Was VERY good, disappeared...
4. Chhotoder Katha: used to be published from Bardhdhaman
5. Jhumjhum : a mini magazine. I still think it was one of the richest, in terms of quality.
6. Anandamela : of old days, where we read Gabbush Gubbai, a story by poet Niren-dranath Chakroborty, not the recent version for "young adults"
7. Some special Puja numbers : Can you remember some names?
8. Please add on... would love to reminisce.

I remember the Juvenile

ment, no democracy, nothing will work until and unless we come above the party politics. Until we do not put the country's interest above party and personal interest (that include all including the leaders of BNP, AL, JI, and JP), no caretaker government will be able take care of the country and politics for better future.

Until we get rid of our prejudice from our mind and start respecting different opinion from ours, no God will give us better leaders we all cry for to take us to the next century. Because, the leaders of a nation reflect the people of the nation.

Md. Mahbubur Rahman
rahman@chem.ubc.ca
Canada:

I don't know the authentic-

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I remember the Juvenile

BANGLA NOBO BORSHOW ALO DAR PRANTE

Mahmood Hassan
hassan@kenroku.ipc.kanazawa-u.ac.jp
Kanazawa, Japan:

POHELA BOISHAKHE ROMNA BOTO MULE-r Kotha Mone Pore.
Robindro Shangit ar shathe Pora morich ar Panta Vat -- Khub Shokale oi ekti Din fire abar pabo kobe?

Shudur Markin
Juktorashter Pittsburgh shahar theke apnather shobaike janachchi Shubho NaboBarsha. Bhalo thakun. Shanti ashuk Bangladeshey.

--Ishtiaque Ahmed

Aro Age Borisale Boishakhi Mela theke Koto Ki kine anar Kotha mone pore. Eak poishar banchi ar tin poishai kema Moa Murki-r Kotha Vola ki Zay??

Please share moments with people of Bangladesh who might celebrate 1403 Bangla Nabo Borshow with much joy after a long struggle against unjust.

I have opened yet another page to co-memorate Bangla Nabo Barshow in INTERNET. Please have a touch of sweet nostalgia clicking from:

http://kipewww.ipc.kanazawa-u.ac.jp:8080/~med2/28/hassan.html

In Kanazawa, Japan we shall celebrate the day with a cultural program at International Coffe Hour spot and offer Bangla deshi delicious food to Japanese participants.

Shuvo Nabo Barshow!

Ishtiaque Ahmed
ahmed@ahmed.4uwing.upmc.edu
http://ahmed.4uwing.upmc.edu/USA:

Shudur Markin Juktorashter Pittsburgh shahar theke apnather shobaike janachchi Shubho NaboBarsha. Bhalo thakun. Shanti ashuk Bangladeshey.

Nalinaksha Bhattacharyya
bhattacha@unbkg.ubc.ca
Canada:

Sobaike Nabo Borsher Priti o Shubhechha Janai

Gautam SenGupta
imacs@aol.com
USA:

The Banga-Parichaya (http://users.aol.com/imacs/in dex.html) team wishes Bengalis all over the world in general, and participants in soc.culture.bengali and soc.culture.bangladesh in particular, a very happy and prosperous Naba-Barsha! May you all be successful in your journey, and find peace and happiness where ever you are!

Hassan
<unknown> USA:

Dasgupta, Apnar lekha poreh money porchehey je oi kagojguli katha ami bodhoy shunchechi. Bahattor/Tlatter-e Bangladesh thekey amader kachchey (Kolkatay) amader Naheed Khalamoni beRate aashten. Uni Muktiyudhdher golpo bolten, ar shongey aanten prochur chhotoder kagoj.

Amar jotoder money porchehey. Al Mahmud-er "Amma bolen/ Porh-er shona/Abba bolen/Mon Dey/ Paathey amar / mon boshena/ Kainthaal

chaa[m]par/Gondhey" ei opurbo chora-ti kono ekta shishu-potrikay prothom dekhli. Naam-ta mone porchehey-na Bohudin por Dhakay Shilpo-Kala Academy-te gye jokhon onlike ei katha boli. uni khub-i bishmito o anondito bodh korechhilen.

Jhum-jhum naamer je kagojtar katha bolchhila. sheta chhilo char inch by char inch ekta khudey portika. Sheta-ty, amar money porey. Kallol Tripthiti bole ekjon baaro bochorer chheley (shel shomoye baro) darun chhobi aanko. Shey ekbar e(n)kechhilo "Bangladesher Muktiyudhdho" naamer ekta chhobi. Chhobita amar ekhono money aachhey.

Okhanei porchechilam. "Iahia Khan/ Boro beiman/ Bangalirey mere mere/ korechhey shoshaan". Tokhon khub koshto hoto. Shei koshto-tai ekhono buke niye berachchi, Hassan-bhai.

Pradipta Chhanda Sarkar
psarkar@iastate.edu
USA:

Another favourite magazine of mine was Kishor G(n)an Bi(G)njan. Correct spelling in English ? Probably Kishor Jnan Bijnan ?

Dasgupta, Apnar lekha-ta besh narah dilo. Ami etai boltey chaichhilam. Sholshober kagojguli jeno keu banilyik jhokjhokey rupoli molat diye Dhekey udhao kore diyechhey. Ektao ki chhotoder potrika ekhon beroy ? Chhoto maane chhototo. "kishore" ba "young adults" noy...

There were YOUNG OB-SERVER and Uncle Kim's letter and MORNING NEWS also published a wonderful Juvenile weekly page I frogot the

name).

It's a nice initiative dear Shoumyo, I appreciate very much. Thanks for giving few moments full of dear nostalgia.

Amab
<unknown>USA:

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In Bangladesh - Telecolonialism Replaces the British Raj

Kazee Kareem
kazmkare@mars.utm.edu
www:
http://192.239.148.46/home.h tml
USA:
Hi all,

Please read the following interesting article at <http://www.pacificnews.org/jin n/stories/columns/movements /950614-telecolonialism.html> [Pacific News Service(PNS), The View From The Pacific] 48 years after the departure of the British Raj, 24 years after the war of independence against Pakistan, and four years after installing democracy, Bangladesh remains mired in a form of colonialism as oppressive as any in the region's history. Bangladeshis and others in the third world call it telecolonialism. PNS correspondent Andrew Robinson reports from Dhaka in a continuing PNS series on the global telecommunications era.

Andrew Robinson
Date: 06-14-95

Telecolonialism -- elusive, ubiquitous and almost impossible to combat -- is the newest form of colonialism to grip this country's 120 million residents.

Just as the British Raj once controlled tax revenue and Pakistan controlled the official language, the communication powers colonizing Bangladesh today control something equally important -- information.

One hundred years ago Bengalis depended on England not just for the luxuries of life -- chandeliers, tea cups, face creams, cigarettes -- but for

The cost of a telephone in Bangladesh, including bribe money, is over \$1,000. And even after receiving the money, the Telecommunications and Telegraph Board (TTTB) may drag its heels on the connection. Widely considered the most corrupt government body in Bangladesh, TTTB has, according to a U.S. Embassy official, the worst record of any telephone board in South Asia.

their daily attire. In today's Bengal, not only luxury information -- business management, computer programming, marketing, English grammars, GRE books -- but ideas about justice, democracy, domestic development, the very concept of the modern world itself, are made and controlled by foreigners.

"It's not uncommon," says Philip Gain, a local investigative reporter, "that to get important information about Bangladesh, I must call America. Getting information here is a long and arduous process."

Part of the problem is a lack of telecommunications infrastructure. The cost of a telephone in Bangladesh, including bribe money, is over \$1,000. And even after receiving the money, the Telecommunications and Telegraph Board (TTTB) may drag its heels on the connection. Widely considered the most corrupt government body in Bangladesh, TTTB has, according to a U.S. Embassy official, the worst record of any telephone board in South Asia.

Combine this lack of internal infrastructure with a powerful external mass media (from the New York Times to the BBC), the public relations departments of large international human development organizations (Amnesty International, UNICEF, CARE, the World Bank) and a plethora of foreign supported NGOs training the journalists, "empowering the women, educating the children of Bangladesh, and you have what some intellectuals here call a bigger problem -- "telecolonialism."

A recent study of the Bangladesh media found that almost all of the country's visual comprehension of the outside world, through TV and published photographs, comes from outside sources. In seven of the leading Bangla language newspapers, 88% of the information about America carries a Western media logo.

At the same time foreign-funded development and me-

dia organizations -- not their Bangladeshi counterparts -- are the ones that dissect Bangladesh into bite size data packets for global dissemination. They are the first to tell the world about the "subjugated" status of women in Bangladesh, the employment of child labor, or the death toll of another cyclone. If they want to sound positive, they inform the world about the success of their own development projects.

"We get foreign reporters here all the time," says Tajul Islam, public relations director of the Bangladesh Rural Advance Committee, the largest foreign-funded domestic NGO in the world. "Ninety-nine percent of the articles they write about us are positive."

One effect of this information imbalance can be seen in the trade debate over child labor. While such communication-rich countries as France and the U.S. try to persuade the World Trade Organization to withhold trade privileges from Bangladesh because of its child labor practices, many international organizations are persuading consumers to boycott South Asian garments.

Yet it's virtually impossible for Bangladeshis to learn about the controversial practices of foreign companies -- how, for example, Chase Manhattan Bank has been trying to influence politics in Mexico for years, as reported in Harper's Magazine; or the way many foreign companies use sexual images of women to advertise their products (something forbidden in Bangladesh). Bangladeshis would never be

able to boycott these companies because they lack both access to such information and the means to publicize it.

Before their democratic revolution in 1991, Bangladeshis were portrayed by telecolonialists as a country lacking in democracy and human rights. After all, they had only a few daily newspapers -- unlike the dozens of major papers now running AP, Reuters, the International Herald Tribune, no CNN, BBC or Zee TV; no "Santa Barbara" soap operas, only a few private cars, hardly any English-medium schools, and almost no teenagers with feathered bangs, sunglasses, rock-n-roll T-shirts.

Today with a democratically elected parliament that hasn't convened since March 1994, opposition strikes that shut the country down for weeks at a stretch, a fertilizer crisis that could lead to widespread famine, election fraud scandals and a voter registration fiasco that has stalled government operations for weeks, one can't help but wonder if the telecolonialist idea of a democratic state was right for Bangladesh.

In perhaps the ultimate conquest of telecolonialism, Bangladeshis today fight in the telecolonialists' wars -- just as their ancestors fought British troops during the Raj and the Pakistani military after independence. Over 3,200 Bangladeshis "Blue Helmets" are stationed around the world, fought in the Gulf War, helped enforce democratic elections in Cambodia, accompanied the U.S. into Haiti and are holding the frontlines in Bihae -- not because of any ideological agreement with the cause but "for the money, the thrill of adventure, and the opportunity to serve humanity," as Nurul Momen of Dhaka University puts it.