

VOICES... Young People Speak Out

When Politics Stabs the Prospect

by MJH Javed

If you are asked to diagnose the number-one disease of our educational institutions, you need not take enough time for that purpose. You will find a common disease in no time with all our colleges and universities.

Needless to mention, the name of that disease is 'terrorism'. This is the most available event in our centres for learning. We cannot think of a day, more exactly of a moment, when there is no probability of occurring any clash among our future statesmen!

While you start for the campus you are not certain that you would return home alive. Colleges and universities act in the same manner. They resume and they remain closed but the politicians seldom care for that.

We don't care for the family to which the lost youth belonged. We scramble for the deadbody to stage mourning procession in favour of a particular political party or in protest against another. 'Politics of dead body' made us blind. We never think anything outside the party interest. Thus loss of the family is the gain of the political party.

Parents that brought him to this beautiful world and sent him for education to the university keep on crying. But will our political leaders pay heed to their tears? No, they have not the time for that.

One of my friends who is an activist of the student wing of a party told me that he had come to the university to do politics. Not only that, to my utter surprise he stated that a meaningful university life could not be enjoyed in only four years. Session-jam may fulfill his aspiration and provide enough time to do politics. Now what about the middle-class families that are waiting to see their children educated and employed? When common students are looking for a session jam-free university, activists of the political parties are trying to give it a permanent shape. Now politicians should decide what these universities and colleges are for — to study or to do politics?

Before launching an anti-terrorism campaign, we should think deeply why a meritorious student turns into a terrorist? A promising boy who will be in the leadership tomorrow and brighten the nation becomes a curse for the nation. A brilliant boy who were to bring smiles to his parents, why returns home as a deadbody? Who should be held responsible for that? Who should compensate for that?

Eliminating campus violence has appeared as the most difficult challenge in our times. If we fail to face that challenge, and uproot terrorism from all walks of life, future generation will not forgive us. Time waits for no nation. All the others are improving but we are falling back. When will our politicians realise that fact? I will try to point out how the negative politics of our politicians is responsible for campus violence and how their positive attitude and goodwill can make the campus terrorism-free.

How situation compels one to get involved in politics: Many students do not get involved in politics voluntarily.

They fall victim to odd situations. For example: it is an open secret that residential halls of colleges and universities are captured by the armed cadres of the political parties. Armed hoodlums of different political parties occupy residential halls and turn them as their strongholds. They consolidate their position by increasing the number of their supporters. They even do not hesitate to let the outsiders enter into the halls to threaten the students that if they do not take part in slogans and meetings they will not be allowed to stay in the hall. Moreover, when the admission is over, the newcomers from remote areas who have no kith and kin in the city find no other way except requesting the leaders to have a seat in the hall. Seats are not allotted on the basis of merit by the university authority, the big brothers do it. They provide seats for the students on condition that they would give active support to the party whose leaders dominate the hall. Such give and take system compels many students to get involved in politics and be nipped in the bud.

Armed cadres sponsored by politicians: Politics is a lucrative business in our country. Politicians do politics not to serve the country. They are the professionals in this field. They formulate different policies to gain profit from politics. They do their business in the name of public interest. To get power or to remain in power they need minimum support from the people, specifically from the military and from the students. One of the former military rulers of Bangladesh formed a party while in power and made attempt to attract at first the student community in his policies. He would offer the meritorious students attractive scholarships and foreign tours not as the recognition of their merit rather he persuaded them to get involved in his party.

Many meritorious students in course of time turned into fiery terrorists. And some of them were expelled from the university. Another military ruler had to step down from power as a consequence of strong protest from students. Students of different parties formed an all-party students union to oust the military ruler from power and their struggle for that purpose took the shape of mass upsurge. Hence political leaders consider their student wings as the last shelter. One of our prime ministers once said that their student wing is enough to stop the opposition political movements. Once student used to do politics for an ideal but now the situation has been reversed and they are being exploited by the politicians. Decline in the values of politics has resulted in the decline of educational system.

Politicians supply arms: Why have students taken up arms instead pens? Who supply arms to the students? Obviously politicians are the main actors behind the curtain. They also assure their armed cadres that arrangements will be made so that law enforcing agencies



The place where youths' dreams become nightmares

cannot dare to arrest them. When one is arrested his party considers whether to punish him or to set him free. Nobody feels secure in the campus as clash may take place any time between the rival armed cadres. They not only counter their rivals by arms they also collect tolls from construction sites and shops and other business centres in that area. Terrorists are the coloured face on the campus. They move freely under the very nose of police but they cannot take punitive action against them due to the interference of the 'elite'.

A former VC of the Dhaka University commented that the number of illegal arm-carriers are not more than thirty-six, we all know them but are unable to take action against them. Moreover, armed cadres lead so intriguing a life that they carry cellular phones in pockets to receive information before police enter the halls to raid. They can easily remove their illegal arms at a safer place before facing the police and this is the reason why all the arms recovery drives failed.

Parties reward their armed cadres: Armed cadres are directly rewarded by their respective political parties. Our country is poor but our political parties are not. They are the factories of black and white money.

What is the source of income of our political parties? How can they spend huge amount of money during the time of election? It is true that only moneyed men can do politics in Bangladesh — if you donate money to the party, you are likely to get nomination from that party to compete in the elections. Like the moneyed men, armed cadres also dream to be cabinet members in the future.

When the terrorists leave the university, they no more remain a middle-class boy rather they become able to buy luxurious car and apartment. They get nomination from the party to be a legislator first and then a minister. In the public meetings they shed tears for deprived masses and for peace in the country. They dream of an ill-fate free Bangladesh. They urge upon for a terrorism-free campus but they forget all this totally when their own purposes are served.

Parties hinder freethinking: Political parties and their leaders virtually never expect peaceful atmosphere on the campus. No explanation is required to support this fact. As we have mentioned earlier they are engaged in negative politics they do not want the educational institutions to run smoothly, they want only to

consolidate their strength and realise their party interests. In the Arts Building of the Dhaka University we had to postpone our scheduled classes many times due to the leaders' shrilled voice. If they do politics for peace, why don't they let us stay in the classroom? In fact political parties have snatched away the thinking power of the upcoming generation. Fair politics is always conducive to the maturity of the state. In an independent country like Bangladesh politics should be transparent and politicians should provide the room for free-thinking to all. One should have the opportunity to characterise politics by virtue of one's individual judgment and political philosophy in our arena of politics. Party judgment is detaching individual judgment, that is the policy you should like is determined by your own party not through your observation. Hence student leaders work as the soldiers of the party for its interest.

Today's challenges and next commitments: Present government is pledged to restore law and order in the society. But a consensus is needed between the government and the opposition in this regard. Government will never be able to uproot terrorism from the

society unless the opposition play a positive role. Uneasy situation is prevailing at the Dhaka University today as armed cadres are playing chase and counter-chase game on the campus. Present Prime Minister promised before the election that if voted to power she would restore peaceful academic atmosphere on the campus. Now in the DU case she should take all the historic impartial effort making it able to remove terrorism and session jam. The solution to Dhaka University problem is certainly a political one. It is thus up to the politicians whether they would let it run peacefully or not. Now what is the way out? As a sufferer I would like to put forward certain measures that should be taken to make all educational institutions including Dhaka University terrorism and session jam-free.

Politicians have to shun negative politics: It is commonly heard that politicians care little whether educational institutions of this country run peacefully or not as their wards study abroad. Very good. We do not discourage them as common people we also should not insist on that. We rather wish that sons and daughters of our leaders build up their lives properly a brighter our nation after returning home or re-

maining there. We are proud of them as they are getting better education. But political leaders do not have the right to destroy the upcoming generation of this country. For realising their own interest they should not play ducks and drakes with the lives of many youths, with the lives of beloved sons of many mothers. Therefore, party politics should be prohibited from campus.

As a conscious citizen of this country everybody should know about the politics and political development of this country. As an educated part of the society, students also should acquire vast knowledge on politics, national and international but they are never to be exploited by the political leaders and their parties. In this respect if the legislators cannot come to terms in the Parliament they should leave it to the students. If necessary, a plebiscite should be held whether majority of students want party politics on the campus or not. They would respond in a democratic way — if they vote against party activities in the educational institutions, nobody has the right to impose that on them. Moreover Bangladesh is an independent and democratic country where everybody should enjoy the right to choose their way of life. Our leaders irrespective of different ideologies also cry every-day for democracy.

To this point, we can recollect our politicians that freedom-loving student community of this country did not remain within the yard of home whenever the nation needed their participation in policies. It is Dhaka University where the flag of independent Bangladesh was hoisted for the first time. Patriot students of this university fought to make their motherland independent. In almost all the mass upsurges students rather played positive and inspiring roles. Now if the nation needs their participation they can play the pioneering role to develop it. Students should do only constructive politics and they have to be educated properly for that. Bangladesh is perhaps the only country on the globe where students are being exploited by the politicians in the name of 'so-called politics'. Even in neighbouring India, where many students of Bangladesh go for studying, the scenario is different.

Police should be empowered to punish terrorists: Why is police necessary on the campus? Should not education of the institutions work like a family? Are not all students brothers? Why should they be classified on the basis of party affiliation? Why campus has turned into a battlefield? Presence of police force on the campus, of course, is the sign of our social degradation and decline in our moral values. Again, law enforcing bodies cannot apply their supreme power to punish the criminals. Police cannot discharge their duties freely due to the intervention of the influ-

ential leaders who nurture the armed cadres. Rule of law will never take proper shape unless we abide by the law. No society can establish 'rule of law' violating the law. Politicians have to realise that a criminal has no party, he is the enemy of all but friend of none. When one is given exemplary punishment others will then refrain from terrorism. Thus a 'crusade' against the terrorists is necessary.

Administration should be made strong: I cannot make out how a terrorist can remain a student at the university for years. Why shouldn't the university authority drive out the students who fail to appear at the examinations for two consecutive years? IBA of DU where every student is serious to maintain their studentship has set an example in this regard. It is a matter of pleasure to say that IBA is a session jam-free part of the university. If anybody is caught red handed with arms he should be expelled from the university instantly. There are also examples that administration does not work impartially. Partisan attitude of authorities has created an uncongenial atmosphere on the campus. Teachers are also not beyond that allegation but I think they should play the path-finding role to bring discipline in the nation. All expect proper guidance from the teachers' community and if they fail to maintain their dedicatory role our pride for them will be meaningless. Thus teachers should avoid narrow party politics in the greater interest of the nation.

Unemployment problem should be solved: This is the most crucial issue to consider. Unemployment is a curse to the nation. But who are responsible for that? Certainly the politicians. Their negative and self-seeking politics threatens national, political and economic stability.

They call for hartal, siege, non-cooperation and what not to realise their demands. These have resulted in plight of our economy. Only the positive attitude of the politicians can assure political stability which would ultimately encourage the foreign investors to invest in our country. Obviously this would create employment opportunity. An unemployed youth adopts terrorism as a profession finding no other alternatives. Traditional system of higher education should be changed. Education should be made employment-oriented. Educated unemployed youth is a burden on the nation. Technical education should be sponsored by the government and the leading industrialists. Self-employment also should be encouraged.

Last but not least, students belong to the nation, not to the political parties. Students have to discover the treasure hidden inside them. They have to know the country and its problems. Responsibility is on their shoulders to face the challenges of the days ahead. Educational institution is the venue where he or she is to know the truth. Knowledge-seeking students should remain vigilant against the greedy eyes of self-seeking politicians.

The writer studies IR at DU

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Tuesday 24th September

(All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programmes)

BT

3:00 Opening Announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary 3:10 Recitation From the Geeta 3:15 Documentary Film: Cinema Europe 4:00 News in Bangla 4:15 Esho Para Shikhi 4:45 Cartoon Series: The Animals of Parthingwood 5:00 News in Bangla 5:20 Sangeeta: Modern Songs 6:00pm News in Bangla 6:05 National Television Debate Competition 7:00 The News 7:05 Open University 7:25 Comedy Series: Sainfield 8:00 News in Bangla 8:40 Drama Serial 10:00 News in English 10:30 Ghare Bairey 10:55 Mini Series 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Wednesday's programme 11:40 Close down

BBC

6:00am BBC Newsroom inc. World Business Report/Asia Today/24 Hours 7:00 BBC Newsroom inc. World Business Report/Asia Today/24 Hours 8:00 BBC Newsroom inc. World Business Report/Asia Today/24 Hours 9:00 BBC World News 9:30 Time Out: Tomorrow's World 4:00 BBC Newsdesk 6:00 BBC World News 6:15 The Money Programme 7:00 BBC World News 7:15 World Business Report 7:30 BBC Newshour Asia & Pacific 8:30 Time Out: The Travel Show 9:00 BBC World News 9:15 Panorama 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 Time Out: Film '96 11:00 The World Today 1:00 BBC World Headlines 1:05 Panorama 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 Time Out: The Clothes Show 3:00 BBC World Report inc. World Business Report/24 Hours 4:00 BBC Newsroom inc. World Business Report/24 Hours 5:00 BBC World News 5:10 Newnight



Chicago Hope on Star Plus, Tonight at 8:30

CHANNEL V

6:30am Frame By Frame 7:00 Rewind VJ 9:00 Frame by Frame 11:00 The Vibe VJ Luke 12:00 Rewind VJ Sophia 1:00 By Demand VJ Trey 2:00 Frame by Frame 2:30 First Day First Show 3:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show 3:00 Remington Steele 4:00 Yan Can Cook 4:30 El For Your Entertainment 5:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 5:30 Adventures Of Black Stallion 6:00pm Lost in Space 7:00 Home and Away 7:30 Charles in Charge 8:00 MASH 8:30 Chicago Hope 9:30 The Extraordinary 10:30 The Bold & The Beautiful 11:00 Santa Barbara 12:00 The New Twilight Zone 12:30 Baywatch 1:30 Krikel! 2:30 El For Your Entertainment 3:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show 4:00 Hooperman 4:30 Home and Away 5:00 The Sullivans 5:30 Gabrielle

STAR PLUS

6:30am Voltro 7:00 Teenage



Hum Paanch on Zee TV, Tonight at 8:30

STAR Sports

6:00am 1996 Men's Jr Championship 1st Semi Final 7:30 Hong Kong Cricket 6:1996 Day 2 H/L 8:30 1996 Omega Tour Philp Morris Cup H/L 10:00 ATP Tennis Wimbledon Hamlet Cup Final 1:30 KENT Beach Volleyball 4 Man Fm Hong Kong 12:30noon Indy Racing League New England 200 2:00 Asia Sport Show 2:30 Squash Super Series Cathay Pacific Perrier Open 3:30 This is the PGA Tour 4:30 ATP Tennis Wimbledon Hamlet Cup Final 7:00 1996 Men's Jr Championship 2nd Semi Final 9:00 Hong Kong Cricket 6's 1996 Day 2 H/L 10:00 Trans World Sport 11:00 World Windsurfing H/L 11:30 Prime Boxing Fight TBC 1:30 Thai Kickboxing Highlights 2:30 Indy Racing League New England 200 4:00 The Asian Football Show 5:30 Australian Football League Highlights

STAR MOVIES

7:30am World Cinema: Johnny Stecchino 18 (English Subtitles) 9:30 Comedy The Navigator PG (Slient/11:30) Film Club: Secrets of A Married Man 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 1:30 Family: Dutch PG (Hindi Subtitles) 3:30 Adventure Love and Bullets 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30 Western: Django 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 7:30 Family Great Land Of The Small PG (Hindi Subtitles) 9:00 Hollywood 1 On 1 9:30 Action: No Man's Land 18 (Hindi Subtitles) 11:15 The Bulletin

Music Time 3:00 Karz 3:30 Abhineti 4:00 Kal Bhi Aaj Bhi 4:30 Upanyas 5:00 It's My Choice 5:30 Dil Dekhe Dekho 6:30 Damendra Special 7:30 Daane Anar Ke 8:00 Filmi Chaat 8:20 Hasen Pal 8:30 Number 1 9:00 Orlem Hit The Hit Hai 9:30 Instinct: Purushkshetra 10:30 Stand by 10:40 Saisila 11:00 Mory Usha Urmil Show 11:30 Foltana Chao Cinema 12:00 Akanksha

PTV

8:00 am Tilawat Aur Tarjuma /Hamd/Naat 8:20 Cartoon 8:30 Khabran 8:45 Beauty Care 8:50

Fun Kadha 9:10 Dhanak & Health Tips 10:05 Har Taan Heli Deepak 10:30 English Film: Home Improvement 10:55 Milli Naghma 11:00 Khabran 11:10 Anita (Serial) 12:00 Sports Hour 12:55pm Quran-e-Hakeem 1:02 Bismillah 1:15 The Science Show 2:00 Yeh Jahan (Music video) 2:25 Animated Classics 3:15 Geography & Sammar School 4:20 Mithi Sona 5:00 Allah Huma Labbaik 5:25 Qabhi Mein Soochta Hoon (Drama Serial) 6:25 Aou Courses 7:00 Dhanak 7:45 English News 8:15 UN Quiz 8:45 Jab (Drama Serial) 9:00 Break for Headline News 10:00 Khabarnama 11:20 VCD Top Ten (Pakistani) Video

Countdown 12:30 Dr. Qun: Medicine Women (Jean Saymor) 1:35 Khas Khas Khabran/Close down

SONY ET

8:30am Gaane Jaane Maane 9:00 The Three Stooges 9:30 Dennis The Menace 10:00 Dream Of Jeannie 10:30 Surf-Wheel Of Fortune 11:00 The Young And The Restless 11:30 Chamatkar 12:00 Ape Jaise Tute Ki Sunday Mirtu 1:00 Sunday Ki Jeevan 1:30 Surf-Wheel Of Fortune 2:00 Premier 2:30 Closed

Gaan 3:30 Dil Darshan 5:05 Science Prog-Bignam Prasange 5:30 News 6:00 Pali Katha 6:30 Chitrnawali 7:00 Amake Dekhun 7:30 Bangla Sambad 7:55 Dinndan 8:00 Param Purush Ramkrishna 8:30 Naari 9:00 Janani 9:30 Jeeban Setu 10:00 Bengali Movie Club Film Show: Ogo Sunchoh 1:00 Closed

DD 7

10:00 Janmadin10:35 Classical Music 11:00 Ghare Bare 12:30 Prachar (Serial) 1:00 Janani (Serial) 1:30 TBA 2:00 TBA 2:30 Batayan (Serial) 3:00 TBA/Nirjan Dupure Premier

ZEE CINEMA

6:30 Hit Hai Fil Hai 7:00 Rahu Ketur 9:00 Film Baaton 9:30 Film 12:15 Anne Samne Aankshri 12:30 Film 3:15 Songs 3:45 Film 6:30 Film 9:15 Songs 10:00 Film 12:45 Film 3:30 Film 4:00 Film

Garfield comic strip by Jim Davis. Panel 1: Garfield says 'JON'S MOTHER MADE HIM A NEW SWEATER'. Panel 2: Garfield says 'AND HE LOOKS GREAT IN IT!'. Panel 3: Garfield says 'THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE AN OPENING FOR MY HEAD'. Panel 4: Garfield says 'LIKE I SAID...'. Panel 5: Tom and Jerry. Panel 6: Tom says 'BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN ONE WITH FALLING DAMP!'.