The Baily Star

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali

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Zealotry on the Highway

THIS is lawlessness, crude and raw, riding the I crest of religious passion steeped in intolerance for which Islam has no place whatsoever. Either this is nipped in the bud or we open the flood-gate of fanatical fights between keepers of religious followers. On Friday last, the followers of Charmonai peer falling over those of Dewanbagh peer to prevent the latter from attending a scheduled religious meeting of theirs. violent clashes took place between the two sides. The police were drawn into the vortex. Resultantly, two persons got killed in nervous police firing; 200 were injured; well over a hundred vehicles were torched and damaged, traffic along Dhaka-Narayangani road intersection of Dhaka-Chittagong highway was disrupted throughout the day; and Narayanganj remained tense from the clannish battles.

Handling anything with religious connotation softly — the Brahmanbaria episode of a fanatical swoop over NGOs being a case in point — has been the bane of law enforcement in an area where the line between indulgence and open invitation to trouble is wafer thin. The chronology of incidents leading up to the disturbances in Narayanganj is clearly indicative of a prior notice being available to the local administration or, for that matter, the home ministry, to pre-empt the eruption.

On November 13 when both sides had convened a rally at the same venue, Section 144 had to be clamped to maintain public order. In less than two weeks' time clashes occurred between the two groups of peer loyalists resulting in a death with an apprehension that the backlash could be wider. The DC holding a meeting of the local law and order committee, representatives of both peers attended it. They struck a deal to let Dewanbagh peer hold his rally at the appointed place and time to avert a clash. Subsequently, the Charmonai peer's representatives and supporters at an Adamjeenagar meeting decided to foil the Dewanbagh peer's rally by appearing in large numbers on the Dhaka-Narayanganj Road to block their passage. The intelligence people came to know of their plans and the Superintendent of Police in actual fact wrote to the Home Ministry seeking some pre-emptive BDR deployment on Thursday. BDR and the armed police eventually came 'but came too late', only after the incidents had taken place on Friday.

Crucial hours were lost through lack of coordination much the same way that we had done before in some similarly sensitive situations. It is our refusal to learn from test-cases that give the mischievous elements an upperhand.

A Tribute to Dadabhai

N TO sooner had we overcome the grief of losing IN Begum Sufia Kamal and National Professor Abdur Razzaq than the nation again plunged into grief. The sudden demise of the most popular and experienced children's organiser of the sub-continent, Rokonuzzaman Khan, popularly known and revered as Dadabhai (Grandfather) has cast a heavy pall of gloom. A tireless worker for the cause of children since his younger days, it was only befitting that Dadabhai should die in harness. On Friday morning he opened a children's painting competition at the National Museum premises organised on the occasion of the birth anniversary of late legendary painter Qamrul Hasan.

Even at 75 Dadabhai was fit as a fiddle and was a great believer in self-help attitude. One of the pioneers of Muslim journalism in Bengal Rokonuzzaman Khan had an illustrious career as a journalist and writer of children's literature.

After the partition of India in 1947, Mukul Fouj. the juvenile organisation, set up by Mchammad Modabber and Qamrul Hasan through the pages of the Daily Azad started losing its charm and popularity. Dadabhai with his great farsight organised the Kachi-Kanchar Mela through the pages of the Ittefaq in 1956. Today Kachi Kanchar Mela is the largest children's organisation in the country.

He was a simple, honest and hardworking person dedicating his whole life to the welfare of the children and adolescents of Bangladesh. The country has lost a great visionary and the Kachi Kanchar Mela its founder.

He can never be replaced.

Keep Shahjalal University Trouble-free

THE three-hour siege to Shahjalal University of Science and Technology on December 3, laid by an All-Party Action Committee protesting a syndicate decision to name different halls and buildings on the campus after 'some disputed persons', appears to have been a prelude to further flare-ups. In fact, the committee has already outlined an intense agitation programme including a hartal in Sylhet today to force a reversal of the syndicate decision. What's more, they have threatened to go for an indefinite strike if their demands are not met by December 6. At the other end, there is a group in favour of the syndicate decision and hell-bent on resisting the activities of the 'fundamentalists' and 'antiliberation forces'. On the whole, yet another closure of the university looks highly likely. The situation unmistakably smacks of transference of national politics on to the campus and is, therefore, deplorable.

Regardless of whether the decision is controvertible or not, that the syndicate is empowered to take such decisions is indisputable. Any attempt that challenges its authority is simply unacceptable. More so, when such an attempt aims at disrupting academic activities. The All-Party Action Committee is certainly at fault in pursuing a violent path to articulate its demand. If it felt so very strongly about the issue, it could surely have approached the authorities and laid out its objec-

tions. Despite growing concern over politicisation of our educational institutions, and amidst increasing demand to delink campuses from national politics, political interference in academic activities at the country's universities shows no sign of letting up. On the contrary, it appears intensifying every day. We would urge the political local leaders for their immediate intervention to defuse, instead of fanning, tension at the Shahjalal University and work out a peaceful end to the deadlock.

How Fair is Hartal?

by Mansoor Mamoon

ARTAL, meaning shutdown, is originally a Guzrati word. India's founding father Mohondas Karamchand Gandhi, who hailed from Guzrat, picked up the word from his mothertongue and made wide application of it in the non-violent, non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement waged by him against the British colonial overlords in the then In-

But the word Hartal is no longer used in Gandhi's India. In its place the Hindi word 'bandh' is now generally used. In India 'bandh' is also used in extreme cases of voicing protests and that too regionally. All-India basis bandh is unheard of after the British left the country. In Pakistan too countrywide hartal is now a rarity and when enforced it is usually urban-based, mostly in the ethnic strife-torn city of Karachi.

In erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, hartals were initially referred to as general strike and were mostly resorted to by the students during the historic Language Movement and was used to be confined within the precincts of the educational institutions. The first successful popular general strike throughout the province was enforced spontaneously in the aftermath of the gunning down of the students demanding the establishment of Bangla as one of the state languages of Pakistan.

In 1956 a series of general strikes were observed centering the food crisis which brought down the coalition government of Abu Hossain Sarkar and inducted in its place the Awami League coalition government with Ataur Rahman Khan as the Chief Minister. In 1962 the students became virulent and restive against the Hamoodur Rahman Education Commission Report and a province wide agitation ensued subsequently turning into anti-Ayub anti-Martial Law protest. Strikes were enforced in the educational institutions and finally the Report had to be shelved for quelling the agitating students.

Within a lapse of less than four years when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the then chief of the Awami League was arrested for giving his 6-point autonomy programme, general strike was observed on June 7, 1966 with a toll of several lives in police brutality. The infamous Agartala Conspiracy Case sparked off mass upsurge in 1969 in the form of strikes, demonstrations and widespread violence. Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani earned the nick-name of the fire-eating Moulana for giving the call of 'Ghreao' (seize) and 'Jalao' (burn). This added new dimension to the 'oust-Ayub' movement. Imposition of curfew and deployment of parainilitary forces proved to be futile in the face of widespread mass discontent in the wake of which

Ayub Khan's decade-long autocratic rule was demolished and triturated. For the first time general strike or hartal proved to be an effective weapon.

On March 1, 1971 when the ruling junta in Islamabad started playing foul with the massive mandate of the people of the then East Pakistan in the first and last general elections of united Pakistan, there was again a series of general strikes. In an unprecedented move an all-encompassing non-cooperation movement swept the province and the Pakistani administration totally collapsed. The movement had its culmination in the War of Liberation. During the era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman there were feeble attempts to enforce strikes by the opposition parties, notably first by Moulana Bhasani and then by the newly emergent JSD. The Sarbahara Party of Late Siraj Sikdar who operated from underground, once tried to enforce a strike on the movement of boats and other river craft in southern Bangladesh. But these attempts largely proved abortive as Sheikh Mujib would not allow such militant opposition programmes. He resorted to drace-

prolonged mariais and marathon hartals extending beyond seventytwo hours at a stretch.

Ershad's lackeys used to contemptuously call these hartals as 'Bhoytals' meaning forcing the people to remain indoor out of fear of bomb and cracker blasts. From this time the opposition parties started taking somewhat violent means to counter Ershad's repression. The autocrat used his propaganda machine against hartals by auditing the loss supposedly sustained by the nation in one day's hartal which at that time was given as one hundred fifty million taka. Sheikh Hasina is coincidentally using Ershad's mode of propaganda against hartal and the loss being incurred by the nation as did Begum when she was heading the government. Sheikh Hasina's Finance Minister has recently accounted that one day's hartal now cost the nation a loss of about four hundred million taka (the jump in the figure is probably due to devaluation of taka during all these years).

From the toppling of General Ershad and Begum Khaleda Zia opposition political parties appear to have come to this

crackers, crude bombs and other incendiary devices. Every hartal has its toll — death, injury, smashing and gutting of cars and state properties etc. Hartal now appears to have become a part of the people's life and they are becoming used to it as with recurrent natural calamities. According to economists hartal does not much affect the nonformal sectors like agriculture. Even formal sectors have also tuned their mode of operation to hartals by making special arrangements so that normal work is not hampered. But hartal has its telling effect on the students and on the flow o Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as well as transportation and foreign trade. Shopkeepers incur losses for being forced to keep down shutters of their establishments. And those who are required to move outside remain under constant threat for their safety and security. During hartals the innocent people who have nothing to do with politics are usually found

to become the victims. The issue of hartal was also raised in the higher courts of the country where pro-hartal and anti-hartal elements

By calling hartals the opposition parties are violating citizens' fundamental rights as enshrined in the country's constitution while the government is infringing upon the opposition's right to take out processions and hold meetings through the use of police and goons against such attempts. Taking out anti-hartal processions and to counter the prohartal elements by what is termed as remaining in the streets are equally provocative acts. Firing on public representatives and former ministers cannot be condoned, so also brandishing of arms under alleged police protection. The opposition claims that it is forced to go for hartals because of government repression on them and for not allowing them to speak for their electorates in Parliament. Mud-slinging and character assassination resorted to by the top brasses of the ruling party against the opposition leaders inside parliament have, time and again, astounded the nation.

Opposition allegations of wrong doing by the ruling party are not entirely unfounded. BNP leader Dr. Moin Khan once told BBC that the one after another charges had been framed

against most of the party lead-

ers and activists for harassing

them. There is a record number

of over one hundred police cases

against a pro-BNP student

leader. The recently held by-

poll in Tangail has further

substantiated the opposition

claim that no election under

this government will be free

and fair. Restructuring of the

election commission and re-

casting of the prevailing elec-

toral system have long been

demanded by the people for

utopian and will not be in accordance with the wishes of the people. Chamber bodies suggested open debate over radio and television between the two major political figures to avoid confrontational attitude. But in that case the very first pre-condition will be to decontrol the electronic media and make them completely free and non-

partisan . Others are calling for national consensus on the issue of effectively combating the menace of hartal and fin out alternative programmes for voicing protests. There is, however, no spelling out of the modus operandi of bringing about such a broadbased consensus.

The people, by and large,

have now amply realised that the politics of hartal is nothing but the play of the power mongers in whose hands they have become helpless hostages and both the ruling party and the parties in opposition are to be equally blamed for the current political stand-off. Democracy entails discipline, tolerance. cansperancy and accountabilty. Not to speak of western democracies, even in East Asia no such thing as hartal could be found. Uninterrupted political stability has contributed to economic affluence in Singapore and China. Only political democracy is not enough. Economic democracy will have to be ensured alongside political democracy.

Our constitution has pleaded

for both type of democracies.

This calls for placing economics above politics. It will neither be an euphoria nor a hyperbole to suggest that it is now time for the people to put up resistance against the play of the political parties. To achieve this the professional bodies, the NGOs, the independent media and the conscious segment of the society should go for a strong social movement and bring about appropriate pressure on the leaders to go for accommodation rather than acrimony, consensus instead of conflict, harmony instead of hatred, politics and not polemics and dialogue instead of duels. To top it all, the people should be made to realise that the country belongs to them and not to a handful of errant political leaders or parties. Once the people are made conscious and all loopholes for coercing the electorate either through muscle-flexing or through black money sealed off politics of hartals which is the manifestation of the intense and rabid craze for power is bound to meet its natural death as in other countries. It will no doubt be a Herculean task. But atleast a beginning should be

made rather than remaining as silent spectators. The Writer, a SAARC Gold

The people, by and large, have now amply realised that the politics of hartal is nothing but the play of the power mongers in whose hands they have become helpless hostages and both the ruling party and the parties in opposition are to be equally blamed for the current political stand-off. Democracy entails discipline, tolerance, transperancy and accountability.

nian measures to stifle ail voices of dissent. So there was virtually no hartal when Mujib

had his sway. Hartal staged a come back during the later part of General Ziaur Rahman's administration. He proved to be canny in dealing with such hartal programmes and would deftly use the electronic media, radio and television, in publicising and displaying in detail the destruction wrought to the state properties by pro-hartal elements as well as the projection of the supposed non-acceptance of politics of hartals by the masses. Another method used by him was the issue of regular press notes and hand-outs by his Home Ministry and the Press Information Department (PID) giving the government versions of clashes that used to take place between the police and the picketers during hartal hours. Ziaur Rahman's modalities in dealing with hartals are still being assiduously practiced by the present government as was done by its predeces-

The culture of hartals became prependerant during General Ershad's nine-year long autocratic rule. The two alliances, led respectively by the Awami League and the BNP, resorted to frequent hartals in their protracted movement for the ouster of Ershad. The people then first witnesced what is called day and night hartals,

conclusion that the only course of unseating a government is the enforcement of successive and frequent hartals. A confusion is seemingly prevailing about the denotation and connotation of hartals under colonial or autocratic rule and hartals under a popularly elected government. Under autocracy normal avenues for voicing protests remain sealed. Hence street politics was the only alternative open to the people and the politicos. But resorting to frequent hartals when people do possess their franchise to vote a government out of power if they are not satisfied with its balancesheet, simply means going against the very spirit and the basic norm of democracy. Though autocracy was ousted in December 1990, democratic culture is yet to take roots among the politicos. Their mindset has not undergone necessary transformation with the passage of time. The BNP still appears to believe in 'Politics of Hartals' and ousting the government through mass upsurge and not through popular mandate as the Awami League did while in the opposition. When the BNP was in power the AL leadership enforced hartals for a period of 173 days and now it seems to be the BNP's turn to set a new

The hartal industry is booming and burgeoning with the mass production of cocktails.

pleaded their respective cases with arguments. Chamber bodies took initiative to mediate between the feuding political parties. But all these proved abortive. Hartal continues unabated despite Prime Minister's avowed declaration that her party would not resort to hartal in future if it is voted out of power. The response she expected from the opposition was palpably lacking There is also no direct mention of hartal in the country's Constitution. Article 21 of the Constitution. however, states "(1) It is the duty of every citizen to observe the Constitution and the laws. to maintain discipline, to perform public duties and to protect public property." Article 31 clearly stipulates, inter alia. that " no action detrimental to the life, liberty, body, reputation or property of any person shall be taken except in accordance with Law." Article 36 provides for free movement of every person throughout Bangladesh, while Article 37 bestows the right to assemble and to participate in public meetings and processions peacefully and without arms. Article 40 gives the right to conduct any lawful trade or business. If these constitutional provisions are dispassionately analysed it will be found that both the government and the opposition parties are wrong in dealing with as well as in the enforcement of hartals.

strengthening and institutionalising democracy. Some observers are of the opinion that endemic corruption and two weekly holidays are causing more losses to the economy than hartals enforced by the opposition. There have been many suggestions in the past for doing away with the culture and politics of hartals. One suggestion was to shorten the tenure of the government and to hold elections after every two years. This does not seem to be plausible and realistic because of huge expenditure and massive exercise involved in such a process on a regular footing. Another suggestion was to rotate the office of the Prime Minister between the chiefs of the two major parties on two-and-a-half

yearly basis. Prof Younus of the

Grameen Bank called for rotat-

ing the terms - one term for the

AL and another term for the

BNP. Such ideas are simply

At least on this one point both

Medalist. is a former Research Fellow of the Institute of South East Asian Studies, Singapore and the Commonwealth Foundation for Broadcastina Devel-

OPINION

CEC's Dilemma: Hartal and Referendum!

Through the columns of your Daily, I wish to congratulate the President in trying to facilitate the decision-making process of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in respect of the Tangail-8 by-elections. This election process has been a total sham. It is a serious matter that this had to happen. In any other civilised country some heads would have rolled and the self conscious elected representa-

tives and election officials

would have been forced to re-To make matters a little easier, it's time that the CEC should honourably resign. Unfortunately, he has lost all credibility. Resignation of the CEC would pave the way for a dialogue between the ruling party and the combined opposition. The CEC, in the greater national interest should resign on condition that the two warring factions would sign an MOU and a fresh date for general elections be announced by the ruling party. The new CEC must be a person of impeccable character and ability and totally non-controversial. A serving Judge of the Supreme Court should be the natural choice.

A law on the total ban on hartal should be enacted without delay with all parties agreeing to a constitutional amendment in this regard. This country does not belong to the two or few political parties and their goons. If necessary, the parties

should agree to have a Referendum on this vital issue of hartals which is bleeding the nation white. The nation would soon be interested to know under whose authority are these hartals called. The people have not bestowed on the political parties this right of destruction through hartals. The parties in question should wake up and see what is going around them in the other countries of this region. There has been very swift changes in the governments both in its form, character and composition. The mindset of people change very fast. A new party can be swept to power and the older ones can go into oblivion. The Pundits and Gurus of the political parties are fully aware of all this. They are over-stretching the patience of the common man. Politics cannot be the whims and fancies of some individual leaders. The country is not a property of a few individuals. The two honourable ladies must respect the concern of the masses and act in a manner which is consistent with their elevated positions. These positions, however, are not all permanent. Look at Nawaz Sharif, Benazir Bhutto Suharto Ershad Indira Gandhi, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. and so many others. It is a pity that we do not learn from his-

The CEC seems to be in a fix with regard to the Tangail-8 byelection. It is heartening to note

by Akbaruddin Ahmad that the President has intervened to find a suitable solution for the widely displayed rigging by the AL candidate's supporters. The credibility of the office of the CEC is seriously at stake. Whatever decision is taken must be acceptable to the entire country irrespective of the fact that a correct decision might infuriate the ruling party. If a decision goes against the ruling party, it will re-establish the overall supremacy of the constitution and the judiciary and the various other related institutions. Those involved in the rigging process including the bureaucracy and the law enforcing agencies once and for all must be duly screened to ascertain their extent of misdeeds. It must be an open trial to expose the politicians and others involved in such heinous act. Just imagine the waste of time and financial resources that we as a poor nation has to bear for such worthless exercise! If this state of affairs continues, people will rapidly start losing faith in the democratic process.

The general masses are completely fed up with both the ruling party and the opposition. In certain quarters people are seriously thinking about a Saviour to change the course of events in Bangladesh. I am sure such a person cannot be imported from outside the country. If not the person at least their ideas could be imported. It is high time that our talented

leaders start using some of their skills in more productive income generating activities. Unfortunately, the AL and the BNP have not yet started doling out funds during their times of hec-

tic activity and hartals. The only other way would be to turn Bangladesh into a truly welfare state where everything is provided for by the government. The other alternative would be to reduce the tenure of each government to only three years and not more than two successive terms. This way the parties concerned will have a fair chance to govern and no other party/opposition will call Kader Siddiqui, an acknowl-

edged freedom fighter was bestowed with the highest gallantry award. He resigned from the Parliament recently and decided to contest as an independent candidate. The disillusioned Tiger was suspended from AL primary membership for his outspoken and bold attack on Awami League policies. Instead of pacifying the Tiger, "AL" went on a systematic campaign to discredit him. It is a pity how fast people tend to forget the good works done by a person. The question is why? What has he done to get this harsh treatment?

Sometimes, we wonder whether the two major political parties, "AL" and "BNP" have anything democratic within the party decision-making process.

the parties are similar and are run on autocratic lines. Flexibility, understanding and accommodation for each other's views, party policies and administrative management is something unheard of in both these major political camps. Confrontation is practically head-on. The resultant damage to the society is beyond comprehension. The anarchic situation is slowly getting out of control. Terrorism is at its peak. Extortion, harassment and all conceivable vices have reached dizzy heights. There is a fast degradation of human values. Security of life and property is now at its lowest level. Does the ruling party know about these facts or are they being shielded by a group of sycophants and keeping the top brass very complacent about the state of affairs currently prevailing in the coun-

The Tangail-8 by-election boycotted by the opposition parties has been a total farce. We are confident that the government party is fully aware about all this. Actually, to please the top bosses in the AL camp, the AL leaders and the government officials went for a straight kill. Unfortunately it was overdone! The independent watch dogs overseeing the elections have all made their comments which are not at all praiseworthy. It is a shame in-

deed. We have killed the so called "democracy" in its initial stage. Democracy has hardly been practiced if it was at all in existence in any form.

Bangladesh is no longer a basket case of Henry Kissenger. We have traversed 29 years and to date, we still suffer from a leadership crisis. It sounds quite strange when we fail to identify a sincere, honest, learned and capable leader. Nobody is born with such qualities. One needs to develop the same. Institutions are required to be strengthened. Honesty is required to be ingrained in all levels. Irrespective of our religious alignments, the basic character building process has to be re-started in the right earnest if we wish to leave something tangible for our posterity. Let us invest heavily in human resource development.

The leaders, administrators and the bureaucrats should be the first ones to go through this process of re-orientation. The entire country is waiting to see the action of the CEC in respect of this farcical election. If he has the guts he should cancel this entire by-election and announce fresh dates. At least this time "AL" should give a fair chance to its opponents to establish its own credibility.

The writer is a Computer and Financial Consultant.

"Either we act now or we perish"

Sir. The above concluding words of the leading editorial of The Daily Star of December 1. 1999 should be a strong and timely reminder for the authorities to save the citizens of Dhaka City from 'the deadlier black smoke". How can people in the helm of affairs of the various organisations/departments concerned with this problem ignore their duties which has been causing so much harm particularly to the very young and the old people of this metropolis? A few minutes' stay at Farmgate or Mohakhali traffic junction ought to convince any sane person the need for immediate action against such a calamity which has been slowly poisoning the people only to grow as handicapped citizens or face

premature death. Decisions like banning of vehicles with two stroke engines and introduction of lead-

free fuel were indeed timely action on the part of the authorities. However, it is a matter of great shame and regret that the contemplated measures of the high commands still remain unimplemented as a result of which we now face a situation where "the black smoke gets deadlier" and deadlier every day. The situation is no less alarming than the effects of serious flood and cyclone that the people of this country frequently encounter to their peril. It is also not understood how our leaders in the Parliament, the intelligentsia and members of the medical profession are not making any noise to compel the administration to act like what was done recently to save the "greenery" of Osmany Uddyan. We also feel that our hon-

ourable Prime Minister after reading the contents of the editorial referred to will realise the deadly health hazards that we are made to face when decisions of her government taken one and a half years back are

not yet executed by the respective departments. The recent steps taken on emergency basis by the government of Nepal to ban autorickshaws from Kathmandu city should help us as a guideline for immediate action. Zahidur Rahman and

We need a drastic change

Capt Husain Imam

75, Indira Road, Dhaka

Sir. To tell the truth, it is quite frustrating to read the newspapers of Bangladesh. It's not the writing style or anything else rather than the news that they contain. It's so pathetic to hear the hues and cries raised by our political parties. mean what is it that they want? Do they think that the country is their playground? They are calling hartals and holding violent demonstrations anytime something is bothering them They don't care what is happening to the nation. It's like they are apathetic to the cause of the country. Why is it so? How long do they think they will continue these selfish acts? I feel terribly sorry for the people, especially for the poor people who do not even have the slightest comprehension as to what the political parties are doing to the country and its population.

We are totally frustrated and we really hate the political culture of our country. We need no more of the political games and want an immediate stop to these. I, as a citizen of Bangladesh, really want to see a radical change in the political structure of our country. We no more believe or trust the political leaders. We have tasted their water for too many years without any fruitful result. It's time to change the water! Actually it's way past time to change it. We the Bangladesh community in US, are really ashamed of these political leaders. We feel so terrible to know that these apathetic people represent us. as a whole country. We need a drastic change. Maybe we need

to have the members of the past care taker government to come and rule the country for 5 years or more from now. They should try to wipe out the corrupt bureaucratic and political culture of our country. Somebody should act and should act

Ashekul Huq University of Central Arkansas Conway, AR-72032 U.S.A

Accountability of politicians

Sir. I find your lead editorial of Thursday (Dec 2) on the new political alignment quite objective. The 'Open Letter the PM' as well as the letters of A Zabr and Salma Alam in the same issue quite reflective of the general sentiments of the citizens of the country who 'have witnessed enough political instability...and now they are tired and fed up with it' as mentioned therein. Even the EU is thriging

the government and opposition for tolerance and good governance for the benefit of the people. After all, what negative effects these political parities in government and outside are causing to the country in general and the people in particular need accountability also. The welfare of the people getting poorer every day without work or respite is farthest in the minds of these politicians.

Prior to elections all political parties as well as the contesting politicians must declare their wealth and sources of income, their election manifestos listing specifically what they will do to further the welfare of the people of their constituencies and the country at large so that they are made accountable. submit their and their immediate family's income and wealth statements with copies to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Anwar Ahmed Banani, Dhaka