

The resignation that shook the nation

The new President

The man now enconced as our guaranteed partisan President Mr. Sircar is the same one who only last week lost a tug of war with his deputy over a lowly functionary. According to the paper his handling of parliament has also been criticised, as he apparently cannot keep control.

Yet BNP saw fit to make him our President? This goes to show how much respect the leadership holds for the Presidency. Has Mr. Sircar also resigned from all party positions or does the new Presidency as envisaged by BNP no longer require that?

The senior BNP leaders should come forward now and mark their protest. They would do well to remember that when BNP is out of power they'd all lose their cushy jobs as well.

At the end of the day, I think it all boils down to plain and simple

about delivering crude threat to the President B. Chowdhury which resulted in his resignation and also for inducting Tareq Zia as Jt. Secretary General of the Party!

In this grossly unjust and unconstitutional move against the sitting President, the veteran BNP leaders like Saifur Rahman, Mannan Bhuiya, M. K. Anwar etc could have at least tried to exert some moderating influence over the "Young Turks". Have they turned into silent lambs fearful of losing their jobs? May Allah help us!

Iskander Meah
Gulshan, Dhaka

What is in a name?
I was just wondering if it could possibly be that the President of the Republic was shown the door because some one did not like the name of his wife Hasina Warda with familiar sounding to some body

for them. The reason being Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury is a person who is a few cuts above the typical run-of-the-mill politician, and as such gave us hope that a President nominated by a party can actually be 'neutral'. With that, the dream of the majority of people, who wanted to believe in the office of the President continued to remain only a dream. Some have opined that the fact that he resigned as a consequence of the party decision, also suggests, that after all, he served the party interest. That may be partially correct, but more importantly, he has saved all from the mud slinging and a probable impeachment procedure.

Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, who was the most acceptable person to all the major political parties, was thoroughly roughed up (verbally) by Awami League, for trying to be neutral. There were dissimilarity in the mode and timing

of the Leader of the Opposition regarding the "dead body" of our former President Ziaur Rahman followed by the resignation of the incumbent President Dr. Badruddoza under rather strenuous and questionable circumstances are indeed most disturbing developments since the BNP took the reins of the government.

I do not know why and how events like these come about yet I can say with some certainty that these are neither serving the cause of democracy nor the people in any way. What we really need at this hour is the collective voice of dissent on all such issues by the greater section of the civil society without partisan considerations and having total commitment to absolute neutrality.

I believe the present state of affairs in the country is much more volatile than when the country was described as "cocoon of terror" by

ists in the party to take control, with the blessings of their fanatical and visionless leaderships.

Mr. President, your party may have betrayed you, but we the people, will always cherish your kindness and compassion that you have shown by healing the poor and the needy.

God Speed, Mr. President.

Nafees K
Texas, USA

Lowest political point?
This is in regards to Asif Saleh's letter (June 24) calling for Dr. Kamal Hossain, Dr. Muhammad Younus, Justices Shahabuddin and Latifur Rahman to come forward and form a third party. Let's drop Dr. Younus from this list, as he's fine where he is right now.

But I would like to add B. Chowdhury's name to that list of luminaries as well as his son Mahi B. Chowdhury, Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, M K Anwar and Dr. Moyeen Khan.

I'll be the first in line to sign up as I am sure many millions of our countrymen would do the likewise. We desperately need a third front in our national politics.

Bewouf
Dhaka

They are not "Young Turks"
President B. Chowdhury's resignation is another ugly face of Bangladeshi politics. Who called those BNP parliamentarians "Young Turks"? Those Young Turks under Kemal Ataturk were people of principle, had an honest cause and a selfless dedication to persevere it.

Your editorial on this issue was the perfect voice of all the people who care for the welfare of Bangladesh. It is a shame that these short-sighted politicians could demand resignation from the President in the presence of the PM. This poverty of political wisdom is sad and demoralising.

Bangladeshi politics is corrupt and devoid of any noble cause but at least the PM should have some responsibility to guide her followers to the right direction. This is a national shame that a seating President had to resign due to an undue political pressure which does not reflect any national interest.

Akbar Hussain
Toronto, Canada

Shame on this political culture!
Shame on all BNP party stalwarts who actively participated in promoting the decision to remove the

mine President Sahahbuddin Ahmed.

I also wonder how could BNP young breeds unlawfully ask that leadership be handed over to Tareq Zia? Once again shame on all of you, all of you who preach democracy under the shadow of autocracy!

Shamim
Houston, USA

Mazar culture and President's resignation
I am deeply shocked to learn about the resignation of the President B Chowdhury on a so-called emotional matter. The BNP Parliamentary Party meeting asked the President to leave office for not visiting the mazar of President Ziaur Rahman and not mentioning late Zia's contribution on the War of Liberation on his 21st death anniversary.

Only visiting the mazar will not change the fate of common people. The entire nation is facing the worst law and order situation.

Unfortunately, we are not getting any bold decision on these issues from our government. I expected the BNP Parliamentary Party meeting would take decision on these vital issues, but it did completely reverse and made the constitutional post of President controversial. We are disappointed.

M. S. Uddin, Nagoya, Japan

A sacrifice of negative politics
Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury has been forced to resign from his position by the BNP Parliamentary Party (BNPPP). He was accused by the BNPPP for his failure to pay a visit to General Zia's mazar during Zia's 21st death anniversary and to mention General Zia as the declarer of independence. Unfortunately, PM Begum Khaleda Zia ceded to the demanded by BNPPP.

Dr. B. Chowdhury has probably done everything in his power to faithfully serve to promote the political agenda of BNP, but failed to survive the wrath of negative politics. He was forced to resign not because of his failure to visit General Zia's gravesite or not because of his failure to mention General Zia as the declarer of independence, but because of his failure to concur with the current political agenda of BNP.

Dr. ABM Nasir
North Carolina, USA

To B Chowdhury
I could never understand why you joined politics leaving your noble

Honouring Zia: BNP style



Honour thy leader

The action by the BNP to compel the resignation of the President is simply astounding. And why? Because he didn't visit Zia's grave! Well, enough is enough. I think its time a few home-truths were put down in black and white.

Before I start let me confess that I hold a special place in my heart for the late Ziaur Rahman. Not because of his involvement in Independence but because even though I was a child during his rule I recall vividly the deep affection with which people held him. I remember how we all cried when he died.

With that in mind, I have a simple question for the BNP: how have you honoured and respected your late leader? If the President should resign for not visiting his grave, what should be done to the wife that destroys her husband's legacy? Make no mistake. Just as Sheikh Hasina has emasculated her father's role in history, so has Khaleda dragged the memory of her husband through the mud.

Show me how you have honoured Zia's memory? Don't tell me about portraits or minars etc. Tell me about what you have BUILT in our country based on his legacy. Tell me what you have preserved of his philosophy? Tell me if you have held true to his basic honesty and humility.

Emanur Rahman
UK

"The President is neutral, show him the door"

Hats off Mahfuz Anam for the commentary "The President is neutral, show him the door" (June 25). It indeed the thoughts of the common people put together in an eloquent manner.

The present messy situation of the government is exasperating for the BNP supporters. People who are directly linked with politics never suffer in the way the supporters do. They work and campaign the whole year round to bring their party to power so naturally when crisis arises they become the targets of the other people. They are never benefited but have to bear the slur. Yes, they would have been benefited if there were good governance ensuring peace and stability.

Quoting another line from the commentary, "To most voters, and many sincere supporters, what they are seeing of the BNP today is shocking them, to say the least (Will somebody please read the Star letter columns to the BNP leaders?)" It is indeed our earnest request to the BNP leaders, please read our letters, we are your supporters, we want you but not the way you are ruling the country. It is a matter of shame for us, when BNP comes under such harsh criticism.

It is true that BNP during its first term in office had successfully built an image of being a party, which was tolerant, willing to be accommodative and one that was respectful of institutions. We were proud of them and again voted them to power. But for this? A person who was just a few days ago one of the veteran leaders of the party, campaigned for his party through his well appreciated TV programme 'Sabash Bangladesh', is today condemned for not visiting the grave of the late Ziaur Rahman even though it was a party event not a state function, he becomes a no good President and not a single BNPPP utters a single word in his favour. BNP did not care for the national interest but cared only for the interest of the party. This has just created another bad precedence.



The perils of neutrality

It is our fervent request to the honourable Prime Minister, before it is too late, please go for some rectification for the interest of the common people, reduce the number of ministers, put some senior BNP leaders in charge of the important ministries like Home, Foreign, Civil Aviation, Education, etc.

Anjali Akbar
Azimpur Road, Dhaka

greet. The "Young Turks" of BNP want it all and they want it now.

Don Quixote
Dhaka

"Inmates running the asylum"

Omar Khasru in his opinion "Deposing the President: Inmates running the asylum (June 25) is absolutely correct. A group of power hungry crypto-fascists in BNP are taking the country to wrack and ruin in their quest for supremacy and wealth.

The scary thing is that this group has the support of the PM, her sons and the silent acquiescence of old men unwilling or unable to stand up and defend their hard won victory and life's work. B. Chy was only the first victim, there will be more.

BNP has proven that AL is not the only party with totalitarian BAKSAL antecedents.

With these two parties (AL and BNP) defending and upholding our rights and laws, democracy is dead.

Tintin
Dhaka

Out of the mainstream (Bangladesh style)

I appreciate your timely editorial and want to add that a sensible citizen like me is in deep anguish finding that the highest office of the Republic is being disgraced and dishonoured. And along with that a respectable person, a very senior citizen, a renowned/charitable doctor and a seasoned politician like Prof. AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury is forced to make way for some unknown non-entity waiting in the wings to occupy that august post.

The post of President belongs to the people, not to the party, but in Bangladesh we consider it otherwise. B Chowdhury being in politics for more than 25 years should not have forgotten that reality of Bangladesh politics. Merit, calibre, dignity and integrity are absolutely insignificant in this country.

Once you are out of main stream you are simply a commoner. Awami League made people like late Tazuddin and Dr. Kamal Hossain as part of the commoner. Now it is BNP's turn. It is a peculiarity of the land. Nobody takes lesson from the history. AL wanted to make the country somebody's personal property and they have paid for that. It is going to be repeated in case of BNP.

The over-enthusiastic activities of the "Young Turks" in BNP for the last few days and apparent inactivity of the rusted seniors indicate that the stage is now set for the royal coronation. Sheikh Hasina should also take note of that and act accordingly.

Zoha
Baridhara, Dhaka

Silence of the lambs

It amazes me that BNP Parliamentary Party took 'unanimous' decision

else's that we all know about!

At least we could fathom a 'better' justification rather than the reasons the party has provided—not visiting the grave of Ziaur Rahman. Long live the name game.

Yawer Sayeed
Kalabagan, Dhaka

Stepping into a trap?

From what I've read in the interview of the ex-President all I can say is it is outrageous. I agree with Mr. President and appreciate his wisdom. BNP's simply stepped into a trap.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia should take immediate steps in this regard and do something to restore sanity in the party as well as in the country.

Azad
On e-mail

BNP's recent activities

Again PM Khaleda Zia has proved herself as an undiplomatic and inexperienced political person. She should be aware of those people around her who joined other political parties after Zia's death and again came back to BNP.

Now let me come back to Tareq Zia's appointment as the Joint Secretary General of BNP. It seems like BNP is following the suit of AL. The way Sheikh Mujibur Rahman overlooked and forgave the corrupt party people and sycophants, and established dynasty rule BNP is doing the same thing.

AKMG
Toronto, Canada

Do we need a President?

I realise it is very naive to ask if we need a President for the country. The reality however is different. There seems to be a foul contest going on among the two major political parties, as to who is more disrespectful of the office of the president of the country.

BNP elected a party person for the position, but it did not do the trick

of the attacks made on these Presidents by the respective parties in power. The bottom line however is, whenever these Presidents wanted to go above and beyond party interests they were knocked down. To the list of these humiliated presidents one can add the name of the chief of the caretaker government, Justice Latifur Rahman.

So then, who can be the president of the country? Probably someone, who will be from the party in power with a bent backbone, and be a brazenly 'yes' person. There are many such people who graze our political pasture. But the question is do we need such a president, and hence the suggestion why don't we abolish the position of a president, totally.

Mahmudul Huq Khan
New Jersey, USA

BNP

I am amazed that even in the face of total public revulsion and anger, Khaleda Zia is not addressing the nation to try and justify her act.

It will be interesting to see what swings her, pride or common sense. If it's the latter then she will request B. Chy to return. If, as is more likely, she is moved by pride she will maintain her silence like a sphinx with a pompadour.

Tareq Rahman, our PMtobe, should at least have the sense to see the folly of what his friends have instigated. If he can't see this, then the next generation of BNP will also have to satisfy itself in opposition street politics.

Cervantes
Dhaka

Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina and Bangladesh

I have been an ardent reader of your daily for the past two years or so. One of my special interests has been systematic follow-up of development of democratic institutions in the country.

These past two weeks have been highly disappointing. The uncalled for and the controversial remarks by

FEER. A situation like this merely serves the interests of our enemies within and out. Our leaders of today have failed us miserably. They have even gone to the extent of playing one against the other.

Let us come out of their clutches. I am of the strongest belief that that we the "people" can do it. We have done it in the past and we can do it once again.

Shamsher Chowdhury
Texas, USA

Yet another record, indeed, by our politicians!

I often wonder whether we, the countrymen, do keep track record of various unprecedented records that our hon'ble (?) politicians! It was them who called and forced *hartal* in this poor country for some 78 consecutive days in the name of democracy without giving a second thought about the nation. It was very much them who not only brought down the civil servants on the street but also rewarded them for such actions. It was them who made Mr Shahabuddin Ahmed President then shamelessly insulted him. And then of course the recent incident of President B Chowdhury; the list goes on and on.

Once a friend of mine, on a bet, made me to drink seven glasses of water, ever since then she never betted on less than seven glasses on me! That's exactly how it works in our politics, one party is to set the record the other is to break it. Bravo, we're a great nation indeed!

Mr. Mashui Azam Khan
On e-mail

God speed, Mr. President!

President B. Chowdhury resigned due to stupendous pressures from BNP lawmakers. He had to pay the price for being "neutral". What a self-defeating accusation!

No wonder, we cannot retain men of principles in politics. BNP and AL are becoming more and more alike by letting these extrem-

People's response to the Letters to the



Star's people space

Editor
First of all many thanks to The Daily Star for publishing a two day marathon of letters subjecting on the honourable exit of President Badruddoza Chowdhury. This breathing space was essential for the concerned citizens at this hour of need.

After going through all the letters, the editorials and news, the repercussion on the misconduct of BNP stream-

lined and created a strong platform from where every act of the ruling party would be judged from here on. The pulverisation of democracy is obvious. I guess we the citizens have to take it from here and work our way for the time to come.

A Citizen
Dhaka

President's resignation

I read the Letters to the Editor regarding the President's resignation. They have expressed the view that he was removed because of his principle and he was removed by the villains who don't have principle.

I wonder how this principled man was chosen as the Head of the State only recently by the unprincipled politicians?

Waheed Nabi
Sheffield, England

President!

After the formation of BAKSAL-- we have added another black chapter in our vulnerable politics. PM and all her puppets must educate themselves that "President" is an institution and Dr. B. Chowdhury has rightfully preserved its sanctity. Whatever way BNP politics try to humiliate him, no doubt he will be respected by the general mass as every one did after AL tried to under-

profession --treating the patients. You may be of the highest calibre but can be misunderstood by any of your party worker, colleague etc. A party which can drive you out of "Bangabhaban" within a few months of taking the office is neither tolerant nor mature.

We may say that the President belongs to the country not to any party but the evils or devils will always disagree. Your latest deci-

Politics and dynasties

I don't know much about our immediate past President. But I do know that he was at least a man of some substance.

However I was disturbed to find that his son was made an MP. And that Saifur Rahman's son is also an MP.

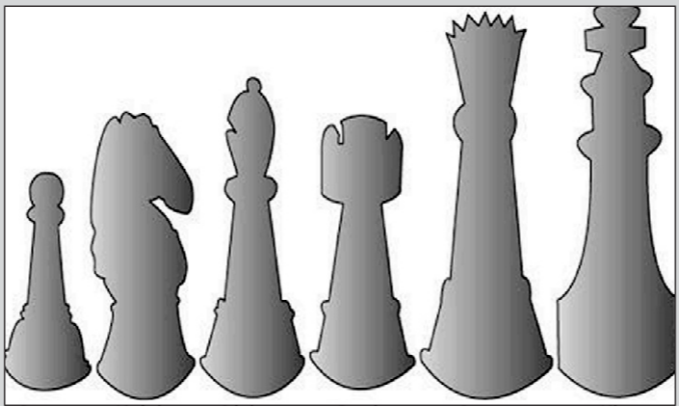
Is this acceptable politics? My instinct says 'no'. Both of them 'arranged' for their sons to become MPs.

There could have been no real free nomination list presented to the local party. Of course the argument comes back about the Bhuttos here and the Gandhis there.

But Benazir and Rajiv were poor choices for leadership. And then of course along comes the Bush clan as the ultimate justification.

And is Bush the best man for the leader of the world? Our country has been ruined from its birth by dynastic politics. And as such our ex-President and current Finance Minister are perpetuating our problems.

Especially if, as I believe, they arranged for their sons to become Mps.



Birth of a royal family?

Ezajur
on e-mail

Ziauddin Ahmed
Gulshan, Dhaka

Creation of a royal family

The numerous letters that have appeared in your esteemed column expressing regrets at ignominious exit of President B. Chowdhury gives an impression that the gullible voters have created a royal family.

Reading the news that the PM has smilingly nodded with approval the demand at the meeting of her parliamentary party to remove the President (as if it is the decision of the royal court) and then watching the PM's son surrounded by highly educated ministers and party men while laying wreath at Ziaur Rahman's grave create an impression that a royal family is in the offing.

The PM's younger son is in charge of developing country's sports (if I am correct), her sister is a minister, and younger brother a Member of Parliament.

So the family needs to be reckon with royal respect.

tion to continue practice has inspired the deprived patients once again.

We welcome you to the real world where the majority lives. It was a wise decision to leave the political world where conscience has been buried a long ago.

Russel Ahmed
Dhaka

Worried about democracy

The way President B Chowdhury was forced to resign is unfortunate, undemocratic and least expected.

I am not worried about the allegations brought against Mr. Chowdhury by BNPPP. As a conscious citizen of the country I am worried about the future of the nation. Where are they leading our nation? The way BNP is leading the country appears to be absolutely autocratic.

Though monarchy does not exist in our country, the appointment of Tareq Zia as the Joint Secretary General of BNP proves that the country is moving towards that direction.

B.T. Mandal, Bogra

It is all in the hands of the people

The force that democracy exists in Bangladesh is now crystal clear. Partisan politics and self-service of the elected officials seems to be the one and ONLY preoccupation.

It is inimitably preposterous to see two parties squabbling among and between themselves on how much respect or recognition is to be awarded to two leaders long departed. It seems that it is of primordial concern in governing Bangladesh. Sure, those leaders did contribute significantly to the independence of Bangladesh. But that is history to be studied, analysed and remembered. But to bicker over who shows how much respect to whom is pivotal in the affairs of Bangladesh, instead of arresting the endless poverty and illiteracy is impossible for any sane person to comprehend.

When a person dies, the Islamic interpretation is that the soul has no communication and awareness of all that is going on in this world and this life. To put an inordinate amount of importance on the dead, and dwelling in the past is an indelible symptom of regressive thinking.

Khan Kabir, USA

A prediction on politics

Late president Zia must be turning in his grave. A man who dedicated his life for BNP had to step down for a bunch of BNP thugs who probably did not even see Zia when he was alive. I take strong objection to the editorial and some letters where it was mentioned that Prof. Badruddoza was subjected to the worst humiliation in his life.

Not true. If there was a single MP of honour, courage and dignity in the BNP party, he would have come forward and raised his voice against this injustice. How can these ordinary run-of-the mill politicians have the capacity to scrutinise let alone humiliate a gentleman like Prof. Badruddoza. A famous poem comes to mind that we all memorised in schools involving men's best friend going a bit crazy. Prof. Badruddoza has done the right thing by not stopping to their level.

My prediction - Prof. Badruddoza will be the president of Bangladesh again and BNP will lose the next election. I hope the Editor will reprint my letter when it happens.

M. A. Kalam
NY, USA

Profile and prospect of Bangladesh

Entity: Bangladesh
CEO: Khaleda Zia
Board of Directors: Uneducated BNP MP's
Share holders: Citizens of Bangladesh

What do we expect from a Prime Minister who has masteen as some of the MPs? The future of Bangladesh is so uncertain that these BNP party people are not even capable of understanding that. Khaleda Zia has been shamed.

We voted her with a great hope that she had learnt from her past mistakes and would lead our nation towards the right track. But that wasn't to be done. Under her bold and ignorant leadership, our nation will not make it this time either. It never happened while Hasina was in power and it will never happen as long as Khaleda is in power.

My simple message to both ladies: Give us a BREAK. We are just too tired to understand your way of running our beloved country.

A Ahmed
USA

BNP following the course of AL

Like AL, BNP has also failed miserably to establish democracy and restore peace in society. The sad removal of the President B Chowdhury is a glaring example of their disrespect towards democracy. The BNP lawmakers should realise that people are watching them.

Kadam Ali
California, USA