

Let good prevail over the evil

MD. ABDUL JALIL, MP

BNP-JAMAT Coalition completes its two years of rule on 10 October, 2003. Two years may not be a long way in the life of a nation, but is not a very short period either. In two years a country can make considerable advancement in progress, development and self reliance.

Side by side, two years can turn in the reverse the wheel of progress, the flow of development. The practice of democracy and the rule of law can stagger and fall into quagmire.

In the elections staged on 1st October 2001, which we consider debatable, the BNP-Jamat coalition was put to power by a group of con- viding experts. We think, that in Bangladesh's history of democracy the new millennium's first elections will be remembered as the vilest conspiracy in reversing the majority's verdict. The consequence of this contrivance was noticed right from the day of the elections.

The results of win and loss in elections under democratic process are a normal affair. But the BNP-Jamaat coalition celebrated their victory like the invading forces of the middle-ages. Their celebrations of winning a noble responsibility like governing a country turned into carnage of killing, rape and persecution. In the very evening of election day their supporters raped a large number of women in the village of Char-annada-prasad of Bhola for the crime of casting votes in favour of Awami League. In Gafargaon, Mymensingh one Awami League supporter was driven out of his ancestral home and then it was dug up into a deep pond.

Before the first of October elections all the promises and tall talks of BNP-Jamat Coalition were centred around law and order situation.

It is the primary and principle duty of every government to ensure security of the life and property of the

citizens of the state. How much has the BNP-Jamat coalition been successful in carrying out this duty?

The terrible crimes and crime graph reported in the newspapers during the last two years amply answers that question.

When in a civilised country an innocent baby could be killed by the bullet of a terrorist while in the safety of the lap of its father and when the minister in charge of law enforcement remains unmoved commenting

Killing and kidnapping of women and children tells us of the helpless state of the citizens of Bangladesh.

In two years' time Bangladesh has turned into the happy hunting ground for the murderers and terrorists. In the front page of newspapers appears the news of 14 murdered in 24 hours on one side with the picture of smiling ministers sitting in photo session with top terrorists displayed on the other. In the name of democracy a reign of terror has been

League leader Polash and Abdus Samad of Dhaka all of whom were murdered recently. They had only one fault, they were Awami Leaguers. Azam of Bogra, an Awami Leaguer, was killed by the BNP activists while he was reciting the Quran in a mosque.

On Eid day Awami League leaders Feroque and Sulaiman were killed in a madrasah in Hathazari, Chittagong.

Anyone could be the target of the

reasons.

Because of a disagreement between UNDP and the Health Ministry, the latter's AIDS project has been shelved.

The rate of foreign investment has decreased alarmingly. Bangladesh is losing its race in the world market.

In the home front a fiesta of land grabbing is going on. On the floor of the parliament a state minister brought allegations of land grabbing against a BNP member of the parliament. In response, the BNP MP blamed the state minister for accepting bribe from criminals. An MP took control of a college in Jurain, while another one took over the Lalbagh Madrasah.

In two years the economy of the country has come to a stand still. The progress rate is nose diving, employment opportunity is shrinking and currency and price of essentials are inflating.

The uninterrupted upward growth of GDP achieved during Awami League's 5 year regime has made a downward tilt during the present government's 2 years of rule.

The price of rice, oil, power, gas and such essentials have increased manifold, whereas the human values are sliding down. More than a hundred thousand workers and employees are now on the streets having lost their job. Another 135 thousand are on the verge of losing their job. On the other hand 106 thousand positions in the government and autonomous bodies are lying vacant, appointment has been stopped. The people, both urban and rural, are finding it exceedingly difficult to make the ends meet- all because of spiralling rise of the price of essentials.

About 5,000 people of limited income, working both in government service and semi-autonomous bodies, lost their jobs as victims of political vengeance. About 400 officers of the armed forces, police and administration were dismissed without showing any reason.

The government created a record by appointing about 150 people on contract to make the administration partisan whereas about 400 officers were made OSD (Officer on Special Duty). More than 3,000 officials from the field level upto the topmost position were harassed with transfers or changes of their responsibilities. They include Ministerial and Divisional Secretaries, Deputy Commissioners, Police Supers, ADCs, UNOs and Officers in Charge of Police Stations were completely reshuffled. In addition, the system of President's 10% quota of appointing Secretary and Joint Secretary on contract basis has been abolished.

Party people having no administrative experience whatsoever have been appointed in the top positions in many of the government corporations and directorates.

The coalition government has even changed the promotion rules to promote the coalition blessed junior officers to the post of deputy secretary and joint secretary.

The state's constitutional body, the Public Service Commission, is being used for partisan purposes. With Bangladesh Civil Service exam papers and Sub-Registrar's exam papers leaked out twice this institution has been turned into a virtual 'party office'.

During the two years this government has interfered in the judiciary innumerable times. Superseding seniority, ignoring the Chief Justice's recommendation, hurting the independent status of the Bar Council, amending the legislative rules are all the glaring proof of the present government's attitude toward the judiciary.

There is no opportunity of speaking in the parliament. The practice of violating the parliamentary procedures is now a norm. Whenever the Awami League members of the parliament rose to speak about the law and order situation, insecurity of the general people, the government's failure in controlling terrorism, the torture and repression perpetrated by the coalition government or had been vocal against the widespread corruption, the government members attacked them personally with unparliamentary language. Most despicable act like switching off the opposition party chief's microphone has been done during these two years of parliament. She was abused with derogatory languages in the presence of the prime minister. The formation of the permanent parliamentary committees is being delayed intentionally to block the entry of the opposition party members into it.

BNP-Jamaat coalition has lost the courage to face the truth in the parliament. The Prime Minister appears to have lost the strength to face the question and answer session in the parliament.

In the latest incident, they could not come out of the party's petty narrowness while organising CPA conference. The initiative of holding the CPA conference was taken during the tenure of Awami League government. Blemishing CPA's tradition this opposition party-less conference will remain as a black episode in the history of Bangladesh's parliamentary democracy.

The coalition government has failed in the management of the CPA conference in every aspect. Dishonouring the country's national anthem along with showing disrespect to the flags of the participating countries have humbled the solemnity of the conference.

The people of Bangladesh had never seen such misgovernance since it independence. Today, a state of injustice, misrule and break down of law and order reigns over Bangladesh.

Soon there will echo the song of freedom in Bangabandhu's Golden Bengal. Justice over injustice, good over bad shall prevail.

Md. Abdul Jalil, MP, is the secretary general of the Bangladesh Awami League. The piece is written on the occasion of two years of the present government's rule. The opinion expressed here are the author's own and does not necessarily reflect those of this



Sheikh Hasina at a Paltan rally: Call for movement against government's misrule?

that life and death lies in the hand of God, it tells us that this indifference of his is the reflection of the oppression perpetrated by the coalition.

Fahima, Purnima, Indrani, Mahima, Seema, Chhobirani- all are the victims of rape. Among them some resorted to commit suicide to hide their shame and some were killed after they were raped. They are the symbol of the persecuted women of Bangladesh. This is the picture of the two year long unabated repression and torture on women of the country.

unleashed to subdue Awami League. The seed of political repression sown in the night of 1st October 2001 has now spread out into a vicious poison tree. Day by day the queue of the dead and the list of martyrs are getting longer and longer.

Awami League leader Advocate Manjurul Imam popular for his neutrality, Kamrul Islam Kutu and Lawyer Bijan Bihari Mandal of Khulna, honest and popular politician ex-PM Momtazuddin of Natore and Sharif Mozzamel Huq of Dhaka, Amjad Hussain of Naogaon and Student

terrorists even if he does not do Awami League politics. In the process of taking control of Malibag mosque in Dhaka the BNP criminals mowed down four innocent worshippers.

Buddhist Monk Gnyan Jyoti of Roujan, Priest Madan Mohan Goswami... and many others are in the list of those murdered?

The BNP-Jamaat coalition has found more better than the Prime Minister's Advisor for Parliamentary Affairs as the most appropriate person for nomination to the position of OIC Secretary General although he has been charge-sheeted in the case of the murder of BNP student activist Nitol.

It is now more than two months that no serious effort to trace kidnapped BNP leader Jamaluddin has been made.

A minister of the government has even threatened the members of the civil society and environmentalists of breaking their legs boasting that he reached the coveted position for throwing bombs in his early days.

After all the above can we expect anybody to be safe in Bangladesh under the rule of the BNP-Jamat coalition?

The Home Minister has announced that he has dismissed 70,000 cases filed earlier, and if required he would do more.

If according to the Home Minister's declaration there is at least on criminal in each case then there are 70,000 more criminals around us on the loose. You cannot be safe anywhere- at home, at your place of work or even in the place of worship.

In Bangladesh, these days, the convicted murderers, rapists, terrorists and arsonists are released at order of the relevant authorities. Ordinary people are being held hostage. If this goes on unabated then time would not be that far when the country would be run by only criminals.

During the two year rule of BNP-Jamaat coalition, corruption has become unabated and has taken an institutional shape. The main reason behind it is the greed of the higher ups of the ruling coalition.

Bangladesh's topping the list of most corrupted countries as declared by the Transparency International is the result of BNP-Jamat government's two years of state corruption.

The ongoing corruption is putting a negative influence over the country's economy. Foreign investment has come practically down to zero.

Before the elections the present prime minister promised to rid the society of all corruptions. The result of materialising that promise is gaining the top position of the most corrupt country in world.

A few families of the country misappropriated billions and billions of taka and smuggled them out of the country. From a newspaper report it was learnt that several hundred thousand dollars were smuggled out of the country very recently. It is suspected that three ministers were involved.

Corruption in the purchase of text books, fertiliser scandal, sugar scandal, jet-fuel and Haj flight scandal, the alleged involvement of an influential minister in gold smuggling have already been published in the dailies.

Wheat scandal shocked all sections of people all over the country. Despicable incidences like misappropriating a billion taka by importing rotten wheat had never happened before in the country.

An influential MP of the ruling party, a close associate of the Hawa Bhaban, office of the prime minister's son, brought in kerosene in the name of jet-fuel and that was accepted by the energy ministry.

In April 2002 the Danish government declared the withdrawal of its 2.64 billion taka aid to Bangladesh. At that time the visiting Under Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of the Danish government linked the withdrawal of aid with charges of corruption against a certain minister.

The aid giving agencies have withdrawn 65 million dollar worth of aid from the health and population control projects.

The Spanish government has taken back 2 billion taka worth aid meant for information and telecommunication development.

Due to lack of transparency in transaction ADB has withdrawn its loan to the Sundarbans Conservation Project.

The Bangladesh government has put on hold a grant of 454.5 million taka offered by the Dutch government to purchase 10 thousand 388 computers for 3 thousand 382 educational institutions for unknown