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Dr. Yunus' peace formula and reality

Whereas the two top leaders of two main rival parties in Bangladesh don't see eye to eye, Dr. Yunus' coalition proposal to resolve political impasse seems to be a far cry. Moreover, present caretaker chief has already demonstrated enough evidences of partisanship. It was a golden opportunity for the President-cum-Chief Adviser to rise above party politics and show courage to resolve political crisis. But, his activities for last one month clearly indicates his reluctance to meet the demand of time. The following instances are given below to show his allegiance towards a particular party:

1. Although 10 advisers have been appointed with the history of checkered career and personal integrity, he does not take them in full confidence when taking important decisions.
 2. Caretaker chief kept all the important portfolios under him, which shows his lack of confidence towards other advisers.
 3. Whereas 14 parties were demanding removal of Chief Election Commissioner and reconstitution of Election Commission, he rather appointed two Commissioners one of whom was an aspiring BNP candidate in parliamentary election.
 4. Transfer of some officials from one place to another does not prove anything of neutrality.
 5. After the Uttara incident of clandestine meeting of bureaucrats, the terms of reference of the investigation clearly shows his biasness towards BNP.
 6. Although 14 parties raised complaint about his previous press secretary, he rather promoted him instead of replacing him.
 7. Surreptitious declaration of election schedule without the knowledge of his advisers is indication of his unwillingness to conduct a credible election.
- This list can be longer. In my opinion, the honourable chief adviser failed to utilise the benefit of doubt that the 14-party alliance showed to him. If he is sincere enough, still there are lots of ways to be able to conduct a credible election in time. Everything can be done within the constitution, which is desired, by both BNP and Awami League alliances. Here are few suggestions:
- (a) Reconstituting Election

Commission with neutral personnel, not by replacing one with another pro-BNP person;

(b) Correction of voter list excluding false voters and including genuine voters;

(c) Temporarily removing current election officers who were appointed by the previous government.

I think fulfilment of the above-mentioned suggestions will pave a good way for the 14-party alliance to participate in the election, and those due demands can be met within the constitution; only true intention is a requirement. But the unvarnished truth is that the chief adviser does not want to be neutral and appears to be the only predicament in resolving the political impasse.

Kamal Tauseef
Canada

Change of GP logo

I am a simple observer of things around and not an old timer. But I believe in reality. I want to draw the attention of the GP executive to their new logo.

The way they have changed their logo, reflects GP is doing good business no doubt. But I want to say, was it that necessary? If I am right, a bill board writing costs thousands of taka and changing thousands of bill boards cost lacs, even crores of taka. If this huge amount could be spent for repairing the broken walls of thousands of dilapidated school buildings with only Grameen Phone name on that, it would have given more impact to the national development. The business executives in Bangladesh are very smart and patriotic. I believe they are already doing good job. But if we look around the world, we can find others not using so many posters/bill boards as we are doing. See the logo of Rolls Roys, it is not changed for decades, then why should we not minimise unnecessary expenditure and save some valuable property/material and do some more meaningful nation building job through our dynamic business entrepreneurs?

Asma
Bandartila, Newmooring, Chittagong

Can a CTG Adviser resign?

I think the relevant constitutional provisions read in entirety indicate that the CTG comprising the

Chief Adviser and the Advisers (presently 10) have to continue in office till completion of the next election as envisaged by Article 58D (2).

As per article 58C (9) the Chief Adviser or an Adviser may submit his resignation to the President but as per Article 58D (1) the caretaker government SHALL discharge its functions as an interim govt. and carry out the assigned functions.

While under Article 58C the CTG shall consist of the Chief Adviser at its head and not more than ten other Advisers, the CTG functions as an unit which SHALL discharge its functions accordingly. It is significant that in Article 58C, and Article 58D the word "SHALL" has been consistently used, making it obligatory for them to carry on their task.

What then was the intention of the framers of the Constitution? Perhaps they reasoned that the Chief Adviser and Advisers should complete their full term. It is significant that as per Article 57 of the Constitution the office of the Prime Minister shall become vacant if s/he resigns, while Article 58 (1) relates to the Ministers. The term "office" implies an authority to exercise some portion of the sovereign power in making, executing or administering the laws (Black's Law Dictionary, P. 1083) whereas in case of an Adviser in a similar situation s/he does not vacate his/her office. Therefore the resignation of an Adviser is of a different kind and perhaps not envisaged to happen within the period as prescribed by Article 58 B (1).

SMS Zaman
Member (Retd.)
National Board of Revenue & Advocate Supreme Court

Small readers' column

We are the small readers of your newspaper. We have a lot of qualities in us. We can write

poem, short story and humour in English. But we have no opportunity to bring those out. So I earnestly request for a special column in your famous daily.

Sanzid Islam
Sonapota High School, Khulna

Needed independent judiciary

Thanks to The Daily Star for its strong steps against the corrupt, undemocratic, arrogant, and unpatriotic politicians. Now, assumably, hundreds of corrupt, unfit politicians must be taking the nomination forms of 4-parties and 14-parties alliance will do the same. Seldom any honest and believably patriotic persons are showing their interest to get the form perhaps because there is little room and environment for the right person. But we can kick off the bad people from the parliament if we can make a strong public opinion for the free, fair, independent judiciary system"

according to the constitution. AS a result --

1) If they (Independent Judiciary) passes a verdict of 14 years in jail to one or two corrupt politicians (any all parties) and bureaucrats for their corruption after proper and neutral investigation then all the corrupt persons will try to be fair or leave their positions and right people will enter there.

2) If the independent judiciary system will make a verdict to all parties against the undemocratic hartal, oborodh, etc. which cripple economy, destroy our dignity, shatter dream of next generation, it will certainly be helpful for the nation.

Can DS please lead the nation from its platform to build a strong public opinion for the Independent Judiciary system? If it can it will become a model for 14 crore people like Dr Yunus' micro credit!

K. M Musfiqur Rahman
Sharjah, UAE

Awami League

I agree with Abu Sufiyan's comments in his letter on 11th Dec., that the AL has been strategically put in a corner, but I do not accept the weak and apologetic pro-BNP stance that he has taken by saying that AL should accept defeat. However, there are larger things at stake than quibbling with such mediocrities.

Given the circumstances and the enormous desire that we have to see a representative government in Bangladesh, the Awami League should consider the following:

- 1) Restart Oborodh on one point alone -- withdraw the Army to the barracks. The AL should allege that it is impossible for the nation to have a normal life under the gun, and this would make the people become hostile to the Army, which our valiant forces do not want. Thus firstly the withdrawal of the Army by the President, until then the 'oborodh' should continue.
 - 2) Subsequently, only after the withdrawal of the Army should the AL start full scale agitation, leading to gherao of the Bangabhaban, stopping the Ministries, blockading the Election Office.....etc. until all of the original demands are met.
- Any decision by the AL to join this rigged farce of the BNP will be a fatal capitulation. Remember, 'only the hottest steel comes through the fire' and we will do that, as we have done in the past!
- Jan e Alam**
Dhaka

Serving whose interest?



What has been happening in the political and election situation in Bangladesh is frightening for the future of the country. The institution of democracy and the culture of fairplay in politics are on the verge of collapse. The arrogance, ineptitude and behaviour of Mr. Iajuddin Ahmed are unprecedented. He is consistently acting as if he as the president and chief adviser has to serve the interest of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), and not that of the People's

Republic of Bangladesh. I must say that he is by no means a neutral person in the position of power, and he is rampantly abusing it. Prof. Iajuddin has already disgraced the presidency of the country.

In the last five years, the BNP with most of its cabinet ministers have allegedly plundered the national exchequer of the country. Now it seems Iajuddin Ahmed is determined to do everything he can to ensure the victory of the cor-

rupt and morally bankrupt BNP-Jamaat alliance in the coming election. In my opinion, Iajuddin Ahmed must be stopped and prevented from taking the country down to the path of destabilization. Our heard earned democracy must not be allowed to be lost again.

Mainuddin Afza
A Bangladeshi educator in the United States

Conscience of the nation

As a very humble citizen whenever I look at my beloved Bangladesh I sincerely feel proud and thank Almighty for making it possible. I am part of millions of innocent, silent and peace loving citizenry and always pray for the betterment of the motherland. I believe in free thinking and naturally do not belong to any political or ideological group and very consciously keep myself away from any intellectual slavery. I am continually struggling to live honestly with my meager income and so far have lived with peace of mind. I feel extremely happy when Bangladesh or any of her citizens like Dr. Yunus achieves anything good and get terribly upset when anything opposite happens.

Very recently I am on the verge of losing my mental peace and find no place or person where I would go, talk or vent my anger. Politics of the country has gone down the gutter

and many of the people who are running the show seem to have come nearer to becoming psychopaths. Many of the intellectuals of our country do not see anything wrong whatever the people of the political party they are aligned to are doing. They do not protest killing of political opponents in broad day light, which is by any standard a very despicable act, nor do they try to find out and expose the source of Alibaba's wealth of the upcoming neo-rich. They have turned into almost a group of flatterers and self-seekers. Even some of the proud custodians of our legal profession and system have become otherwise. I am shocked and dumbfounded.

Both Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury and Dr. Kamal Hossain are very respected persons in the country. If we go by their academic attainments an other qualities, undoubtedly they are far above the group of people



presently active in political arena. They are going to be remembered as men of dignity and also for their achievements. Instead allowing themselves to be used by the

unscrupulous or exploited as it happened in case of Dr. Kamal Hossain in Supreme Court vandalism case, can't they just retire from politics, join hands and establish a platform

where non-political, well-meaning and conscienceous people would gather and contribute something to the betterment of the country and act as guardians of the society? They should not support any political party and should not condone any political mischievousness. Both of them can reshape and rebuild the political culture of the society where 'politics would mean not business but service to the people only'.

I earnestly call upon them to come forward and check the downslide in our system, values and morality. The way Razakars are dictating terms and the way two big political parties shamelessly wooing the most corrupt person are virtually disgusting. Prof. Chowdhury and Dr. Kamal and others like them probably can perhaps become the conscience of the nation.

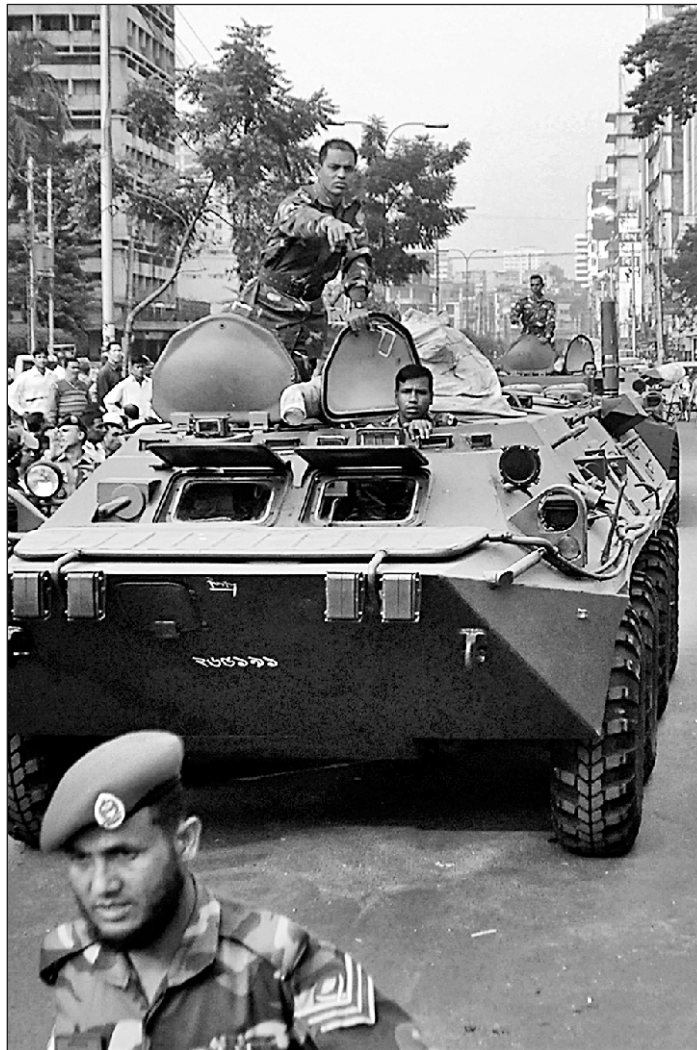
MS Zoha
Dhaka

Armed forces' help

The President and Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government Iajuddin Ahmed has done the right thing by deploying the Armed Forces personnel in aid of civil administration to maintain law and order. The country is passing through a very difficult time, the economy is on the verge of collapse, criminal activities have risen alarmingly, so, the President has no option but to call in troops which considerably allayed people's fear and anxiety.

The two major political parties were preparing for a massive showdown of strength, if army had not been deployed, they would have gone ahead with their plans, which would have resulted in a furious clash. We don't understand why the four advisers had to resign; they were pledged to give the people an acceptable election, and in the wake of troops deployment they decided to resign. Four new advisers have been appointed, we hope and trust that the council of adviser will make it possible for the general election to be held on time.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong



Hajj dilemma



Every year thousands of Bangladeshis perform Hajj and this year is not an exception either. Unfortunately this year Saudi government has barred non-ballotee Hajjis from Bangladesh from performing Hajj on the ground of fitness certificates of houses to be used for Hajjis' temporary residence in Mecca. This is heart breaking news for many people who have decided to perform Hajj from Bangladesh on independent category. There are many people abroad especially North America who are coming to Bangladesh to reunite with their family members and perform Hajj together. These people fall in the second category i.e. non-ballotee pilgrims and similarly their Hajj has become uncertain too. It will not only be a financial punishment for these people as their entire trip to Bangladesh will be futile but also their valuable leaves which are arranged

months ahead of departure will be wasted.

May I urge the present caretaker government of Bangladesh take steps immediately to resolve this critical issue through diplomatic channel requesting the Saudi authorities to relax the fitness hurdle and reissue fitness certificates. We also urge Saudi Hajj authority to reconsider this matter and review conditions of all the houses rented for the Hajjis of Bangladesh and reissue fitness certificates for those which are safe and at acceptable level rather putting a cap on all the houses. We greatly acknowledge brotherhood and durable friendly relationship existing between these two countries.

Mohammad Jamal
Canada