



This refers to Mr. M. M. A. Sayeed Rushd's letter titled "Appeal to politicians" published in The Daily Star on December 22, 2006. Yes, I do agree with his opinion about the crucial time we are passing through due to restless politics. But I can't stand parallel to him as I think Prof. Yunus' proposal is not applicable for our country because the reality is different. He proposed a government from both parties with a view to ensuring free election. But how many political bodies can make this government and in which ways matters such as education, economy and other important sectors will be dealt with? Dear Mr. Sayeed, in our country the president has no power. So who can assure us that in "Yunus' proposed government" power will not be captured by the prime minister? Moreover, the method of forming the intermediate government was not clear in his proposal.

Election is a must for democracy, but to ensure a free, fair and acceptable election neutralisation of administration, an overhauled EC and an A to Z corrected voter list are needed.

You pointed Prof. Yunus' proposal as the last opportunity, but I think if the CG comes with a neutral face and takes steps to make it a level playing field for election, the present crisis can be resolved.

Golam Rosul Maruf
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Sheikh Hasina's words

Sheikh Hasina was the prime minister of Bangladesh and she might be PM again if her party wins the next election. However, she still needs to learn a lesson or two regarding her use of words.

A leader is a leader not only because of his/her position in the party but also because of the ability to guide the masses in times of crisis. By using this kind of language and launching personal attacks on any human being, one cannot establish oneself as the leader of the nation.

Khairul Hasan
Surrey, UK

Good article

I have read with great interest an article under the caption, "We are under threat of sorts" by Brig. Gen. (Red) Shahedul Anam Khan published in your esteemed Daily of 21 December 2006. I wish to congratulate the writer for an article well written and timely. Thanks are also due to The Daily Star for presenting its readers with an article of high quality and value. A write-up like this was long overdue. Brig. Anam said what had to be said and that which was long over due.

I too have been extremely disturbed for quite some time with the display of extraordinary zeal (unsolicited and uncalled for) by some of the senior diplomats of some selected countries taking keen interest in the country's present state of volatile politics and political activism. I am in full agreement with the writer on his observation that these diplomats are interfering in the internal affairs of the country ignoring all boundaries of international diplomatic norms. I have often been tempted to ask these hyperactive and highly concerned diplomats as to whether or not these very diplomats would dare involve themselves in such exercises had they been in Pakistan, North Korea or Myanmar etc where the state of affairs is perennially worse than Bangladesh?

While commenting on the article I would be failing in my moral calling if I do not say a few words about our senior politicians and the government at large.

They too are guilty of having welcomed and as a matter of fact paving the way for these diplomats to literally walk over us. Whatever these diplomats are engaged in, it appears that they are as they call it "taking liberties with the state of Bangladesh".

Rumi Azad
On e-mail

Students in trouble

Dear students, being one of the faculty members, I beg your pardon for taking your so many days and years - as I can't handle the political parties and their student wings which are destroying the backbone of Bangladesh by damaging the education system and research environment. I wonder, how could we remain silent and why don't we find a way to free the educational institutes from these dirty political games!

Some of us tried to take exams and classes during holidays, and wanted to be strict with exam schedules, and take exams if necessary within the department - not centralised with many departments at a time. Some of us succeeded in some departments but in most of the cases, we find problems from within, as they don't want to come on Fridays to take exams.

Moreover, why do we allow so many gaps during the exams? We have 10 months long classes with lots of holidays, and later for exams we allow the students minimum 3 days [for 50 marks courses] to 10 days or more just for a subject. I know some students only use the exam gaps for study and get 50% marks or around to pass the course. Strange in any format! Consider the private universities or our SSC or HSC format. They take classes during Fridays or other holidays, and take exams on consecutive days - no gap. But here in DU or other universities, in most of the cases, we feel obliged to give a lot of time for the exams.

Moreover, if you move to the science, and related faculties where departments have practical exams, you will find that in most of the cases, they take the practical exams after the final written exams. After the delayed final written exams, we have to

take the viva voce and practical exams and it takes another month or so to complete! Why don't we take those before the written final exams to finish the whole thing early?

Also, for the final year for B.Sc. or masters, we take project or thesis and in most cases, we offer the research topic almost at the end of the year or mid-year!! And no evaluation in between and hence, after the final written exams, and viva voce and final practical assessment, students start seriously to do their project or thesis and then take 4 months to 6/7/8+ months to finish and submit the thesis. [Around 15 years ago, one took 1.5 years almost in one department!] And by this time, we all get the written and practical evaluations from internal and external teachers [as we believe that university teachers will do injustice and so we allow the course teacher to mark the script and then another assessor outside the department to mark the script, which is another reason for the delay in publishing the results in time, let alone the 3rd examiner!], and the thesis paper is submitted to the assessors and it also has two assessments in DU and takes another few months. Sometimes, it happens that we request the assessor lots of times to submit the results and even we sometimes send juniors to knock the respected [busy and sincere!] person to put marks and sign to finish the case. So, this is another source of delay.

My question, why don't we force the students to start the thesis or project when they commence the final year and submit it before the final exams? Of course, some departments do so, but that is not the usual practice.

I have mentioned a few points only. I request all to take initiatives to free the universities from strike, etc. And unless, we, the teachers, become less busy in national politics in the name of different forums, we can't solve these problems.

I humbly request all to think about the problems. Otherwise, our next generation will give us disrespect only.

A teacher, DU

Tony Blair

British Prime minister Mr. Tony Blair had promised when he came to power in 1997 that his government would be "whiter than white" but after a decade of his stay in power that pledge has been proven a myth, or an English joke. Both in external affairs and on domestic scene his tenure has been a failure and the humiliation of a man who has become a national joke is discerned in his oft-contradictory statements, following reversals in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Like Bush, Tony Blair too is in rough waters at home as well abroad. He is involved in scandals of corruption in contract deals and also bluffing the people with misinformation. The corruption scandal involving the Saudi officials in a 6 billion pound contract and the exposure of his mischievous dossier in 2004 about the necessity of what came out be an illegal war in Iraq for securing the nuclear weapons (WMD) ostensibly hidden by the Saddam regime have made Blair a joker in the UK.

The controversy brewing over the cancellation of an inquiry into Britain's allegedly murky arms deal with Saudi Arabia in which the Saudi officials were bribed in order to win the multi-billion pound arms deal in the 1990s for the purchase of 72 Typhoon Euro-fighters from the UK has rocked the country.

The political contract to benefit his party men has badly affected the fortunes of Labor Party in the next elections. Yet, Blair defends the cancellation of the inquiry because of the "national interest" of protecting thousands of British jobs and of sustaining the vitally important Saudi relations in terms of terrorism and resolving Palestinian issue, etc. Blair, the closest among the "willing coalition partners" of unhappy President Bush, after swallowing his announcement, presumably under pressure from Bush, about withdrawal of the English troops by spring, now says that democracy in Iraq cannot be destroyed by terrorism, that the 7,000 strong



troops would not be withdrawn hastily and that Iraq would be controlled until the Iraqis themselves become capable of doing so.

One does not know if he is joking without understanding the meaning of sovereignty. Could someone persuade Blair, Bush, et al. to stop lecturing about democracy, transparency and rule of law, etc, when he himself failed to defend them and failed to prove himself "whiter"? Corruption undoubtedly has been the most serious drawback harming democracies the world over.

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Music and commercialism



Nowadays because of the development of audio and video industries we have various music competition and polyphonic songs which are considered a proper match for the time.

But my question is whether music is for commercial benefit or for proper representation of culture. We knew that songs should be rich in lyric, tune and composition so that these can touch the audience's heart.

Today our music industry is full of commercial musicians and singers. But we should give proper respect to the real musicians.

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