

Response to Dr Yunus

On February 11, Nobel Laureate **Dr Muhammad Yunus** declared his intention to join politics in an open letter to the people of the country, where he also asked for people's views. The Daily Star has organized an online opinion poll asking, "Do you support Professor Yunus's move to float a political party?" As of the time of printing there have been 3,766 votes: 67.8% yes votes, 29.6% no votes, with 2.5% offering no opinion. Here we print a representative sample of some of the comments sent along with the votes.

I think our country needs a leader like Prof Yunus. I feel that if they come to politics, our country will get rid of the corrupted, greedy politicians.

Sunny

He is very talkative person. He should respect his senior politicians who are honest and fight for our country's good.

Jannatul Ferdoush

He always ignored the country at crucial moments. There is no evidence that he played any positive role in critical moment. He always confuses people. Any political person should clear his vision.

Mahmud Hasan

Dr Yunus is highly qualified academic turned corporate business person. His contributions in corporate business in Bangladesh and other countries are very much appreciated. However at this stage of democratization and cleansing process, I think he could contribute more as non-partisan civil society representative rather than a politician. I also quote him: "[He] has achieved enough and there is nothing he wants."

Dr Enam Karim

I think that Prof Yunus should not join Bangladeshi politics. He is a decent man who is widely respected. Bangladeshi politics is extremely dirty and corrupt. The current caretaker government is doing a brilliant job in trying to clean it up. It will take a long time to clean up something that has been dirty for such a long time. If Prof Yunus gets involved he will damage his character and that would not benefit the country.

Abdul Halim

No, he is not a good man.

Bhajan

He is our last hope.

Zayed Hossain

He should not join politics. It's not his job. Let him be an intellectual. If he wishes, he can only be an advisor to the PM or president.

Kashif

We need clean and dynamic persons should run the country. We cannot afford to miss our opportunities for our country's development. Long years have passed, so called leaders could not provide us any fruitful things. So we need a pragmatic leader who has the practical vision for

our overall development. Bangladesh should prove to be a successful country in all aspects and we believe we have that ability. We need honest politicians, committed persons. Dr Yunus is the right person to move us towards that long cherished goal.

Afsarul Arifeen

At the present circumstances, what else could be the better option?

Shaulee Kamal Khan

I think good people should come in politics so that people can choose good people to elect.

Ayub

I don't want the professor to join politics. Because politics and micro-credit is not the same thing.

Saif

I support him. But he should inform us of his plan for the nation beforehand, so that we can appreciate the difference between the current political culture and his plan.

Mohammad Nurul Azim

A real democratic party for establishing economic and political freedom and social justice with honest and dedicated people under your thoughtful and caring leadership is the best gift you can offer to our people.

Majibor Rahman

For an active and effective democracy, a country must have an active, vibrant, and visible civil society. If Prof Yunus forms political party with the people of civil society (as he will not take leaders from other parties), then there will have a vacuum of civil society in the country. He can be father figure of the nation. He should not get down in the field and start playing, rather play the role of referee actively and effectively.

Moniruddin Ahmed

I think Prof Yunus has taken a right decision. People are tired of destructive politics of the present prominent political parties. I think if Prof Yunus comes to politics he will definitely make a difference. Bangladesh politics will definitely benefit from his innovative ideas but he must be very cautious regarding choosing people.

Kazi Nasim Ahmed

If we claim to be a civilized soci-

ety, people like Yunus should be encouraged to come and take responsibility of the country, not the existing thugs.

Razzaque

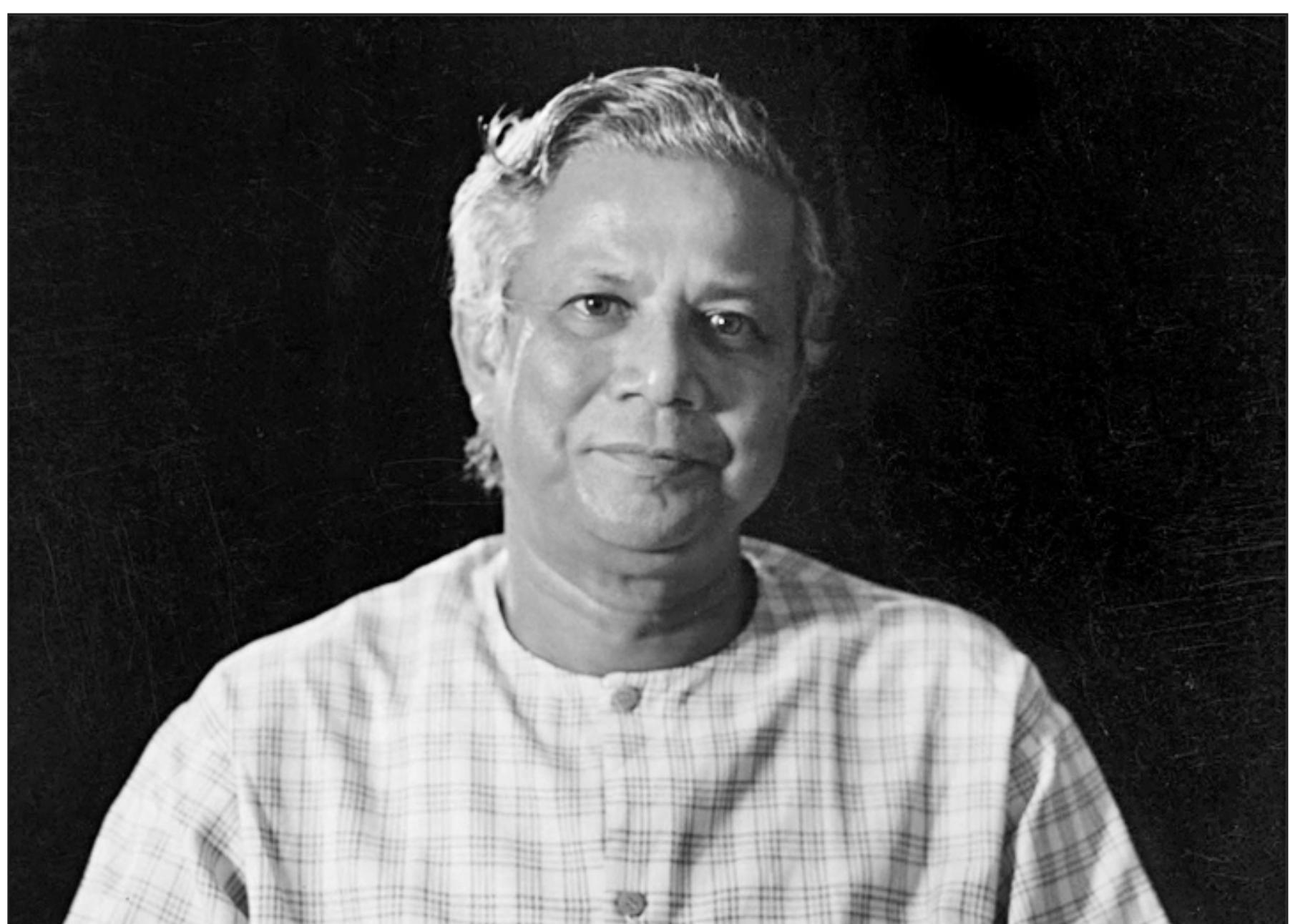
I wholeheartedly support Dr Yunus's move. Two major political parties ruled Bangladesh since 1991, but instead of taking the country forward, they only indulged in corruption, nepotism, etc. In fact, these two major political parties proved they are nothing but the two sides of the same coin. Bangladesh has great potential to be a success, but it must need an honest government, opposition, and honest politicians who will care for people instead of caring themselves.

Look at Malaysia, how far they went under Dr Mahathir Mohammad. Indeed, Dr Yunus can be the Mahathir Mohammad of Bangladesh.

Bazul Wahab

This is a golden opportunity to reconstruct our political system. I don't know how come 29% people said no to this offer. This is surprising indeed. How can these people who are against this decision not recognize the great endeavour that the Noble laureate has taken?

Triporta Das



A real democratic party for establishing economic and political freedom and social justice with honest and dedicated people under your thoughtful and caring leadership is the best gift you can offer to our people.

Mashruf Habib

People can trust Professor Yunus. He is an honest, sincere and highly educated Bangladeshi who has sacrificed his whole life for the cause of the poor. He is well respected in the world. He should be the saver of Bangladesh image in the world. I am willing to join him if he accepts me. In my student life at Dhaka University, I was elected vice-president of Dacca Hall and actively participated in six-points movement. This is an opportunity for me to take part in politics again.

Dr Abdur Rahim

It will be suicidal for Dr Yunus to get involved in politics. I strongly request him to stay out of politics and contribute his huge potential for the people and country remaining outside the politics.

Ali Ershad

It's very good to see that some wonderful people of this land want to put their feet into troubled Bangladeshi politics, to make it more effective for the betterment of people of this country. But we have to be on the lookout for what has been the bane for this country over the years -- foreign influence. Bangladeshi people cannot afford it anymore.

Hosnay Mobarok

We need politics of brilliant, honest and efficient person(s) who can change the fate of the mass of the country. We believe that general people will be always with you. Wish you best of luck.

Md Salah Uddin

I think it is high time that people like Dr Yunus get involved in politics. Our current politicians want to push back our country 30 years so that they can do their looting and corruption. We need visionaries and honest people

political party and running for power will have unneeded stress and could heavily have negative influence on his character.

Anonymous

Why did he not compete with all the democratic political parties when everyone had a chance? Is he not an opportunist who simply wants to use the backing of this military backed interim government to grab power? If he has guts he should compete with the mainstream parties after the next election. I suspect he is going to be our Hameed Karzai.

Nuf

In our country we really require honest, educated, sincere person like him. In fact we lack a good leader, otherwise we have everything. Only a sincere leader can change the scenario. If a father is good, then his family members will also maintain certain discipline.

Kazi Mahbubur Rahman

Although I hate the leaders of BNP, Awami League and Jamaat, but I don't believe creating another party will solve the problem. He should join one of the current political parties and change the system. Party doesn't belong to any family but to the people of Bangladesh. My personal choice would be LDP.

Sawgat Chowdhury

Prof Yunus is a very honest and respectable man and him getting into politics can only improve the country. However, at this point in time, if he was given the position of the head of ACC, at the head of ACC he will bring credibility to the fight for corruption, and finally people will see hope that it can be fought. I feel he can do more for this country than anyone has since independence. So, no, I feel he should not get into politics as of yet.

Tawhid Khan

Dr. Yunus is a very respectable and honourable person not only in Bangladesh, but all over the world. He should not get involved in the politics of Bangladesh. Instead, he should work for the greater good of the world, and continue to advocate for a poverty-free and peaceful world. This way, he can positively affect the lives of millions of people living in poverty throughout the world.

Tonmoy Islam

My question to those who doesn't support Prof Yunus's move: Would you re-elect BNP or AL who has again and again let us down or give a chance to a new era in politics led by a much honest and noble person?

Istiaq

With the current state of political affairs, it is still not appropriate for Dr Yunus to step into politics. Politics is a balancing act and I fear that he might not be able to reform the system without dirtying his hands. The timing is all crucial -- Dr Yunus should work rather from the outside and act as a voice for the civil society.

Safwan Shabab

I do believe that he is a wonderful man and that with his own political party he will go a long way. I believe that he can do great things for Bangladesh and will get Bangladesh back on track as a country and help it to grow out of corruption, and bring it out of the current bad state it is in. I believe that Prof Yunus is the man to do this.

Alexandra Haider

This is an excellent news. We need educated, dynamic and well known persons as a head of government. He will bring new ideas and dynamism in the politics. Allow younger people to be involved in politics. As an NBR, I'll be interested about Bangladesh politics in future if he forms political party.

Mamun

Politics in Bangladesh needs to be revamped and rebuilt. A new leader without the usual "baggage" of corruption that prevails in Bangladesh's political sphere is long overdue. While Dr. Yunus is more of an intellectual than a shrewd politician, I strongly endorse a more moderate leader than a polarizing one. I believe that Dr. Yunus will be that centrist leader who will be able to transcend blantant divisions that currently erodes Bangladesh. We have come a long way since the early 50s, and we can do a lot

more to provoke advancement. Dr. Yunus has the world mandate; he deserves a chance.

Jawad Khan

I appreciate the courage of Dr. Yunus to come forward to join politics defying the fear of getting into controversy. And to me somebody of his stature must try to infuse goodness in the filthy politics that we are in.

Mohammad Salam

Yunus should definitely go for a new party. People needs a party that really reflects and understands their aspiration. He may help the nation to free itself from marauders, cheats and thugs who claim themselves as politicians. The current politicians lack political acumen and education to run the country.

Zahedul Amin

This is very nice step to build new Bangladesh but we are tense about the representatives of Yunus who will participate in election. Are they all like Yunus? Also, can Yunus survive in our current polluted and corrupted politics?

Islam MM

Political leaders (not politicians) can no longer be trusted. They have no social or religious values in them. Due to their sick politics all democratic institutions have been politicized. Judiciary, administration, education and military -- all are politicized. We have only one way to change this highly negative trend.

Istiaq

This is the time to reshuffle and form a new Bangladesh for challenging world in the 21st century. Best of luck.

Dr Md Al-Saad (Bachchu)

