based politics should not be banned for the sake of democracy, and you are branded as a rajakar/Jamati.

We talk about partisan politics ruining our country, but if you look at the people in the chattering class, you can see the division is much deeper. Are they engaged in any less bickering? Amid all this fragmentation, the real issues of long term solutions are getting lost. Sad thing is that some of the people who are engaged in this myopic exercise are very much capable of bringing up the nuances in the debates. Then why are they not doing that?

In today's Bangladesh, the louder you are in your rhetoric, the more the chance that you will be heard. You will be sought after by the talk shows and you will be noticed. In short, it pays to be rhetorical rather than analytical.

But what do we do as audience and how do we judge people's stand on issues? We can look at the track record for consistency and also how evidence based these people are in their criticisms or adulations. Maybe it is because the nuances of the stand of long term relief as well as providing short term relief is being misinterpreted as being a soft stand. Can we fault human rights activists for not being vocal about alleged torture on Tareque Rahman when they have been vocal about the larger issue police brutality and due process for years and no one paid any attention?

Suddenly, people are noticing now because the victims of such abuse are the high profile political leaders, the very same people who reaped the benefit when the same black system worked in their favour.

Does it make a police torture more of a crime when it is perpetrated against a Tareque Rahman rather than a din mojur Shona Mia? Of course not. But defending Shona Mia's cry won't get you headlines. But dare you not come out with a statement in defending Tareque Rahman's rights; you risk to be branded as someone soft on the army.

On the contrary, check the track record of some of those who are perceived as most vocal against human rights abuse today. Some of them perhaps are genuine, but some of them have actively and passively aided past governments when they were violating human rights with impunity. Take a grain of salt, the next time you see these people on talk shows.

It was a bit ironic when I saw a former deputy attorney general of the BNP-Jamaat government, who actively defended the government in various cases of human rights abuse, on a TV show talking about the travesty of justice in arresting people without warrants and proper charges. The message is a good and correct one, but you have to question the messenger's track record as well.

Was he vocal when similar violations were going on ahead of every big government protest in the past five years? Why was he defending



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