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The world and we

With all the hoopla of the US election slowly dying down, it is time for the new President Elect to assemble his team and get down to the business of restoring the world economy as well as the American status quo in the world. Come Jan 20, President Obama will take up the mantle of not only the most powerful country in the World but the country whose policies will directly or indirectly affect the rest of the world. With the promise of pragmatism and deliberate legislation to boost up the world's economy, President elect Obama provides a golden opportunity for countries like Bangladesh to finally emerge from the shadows of corruption and calamity and play an important part in the next "bubble", whatever that may be.

As history has taught us, the basis of every successful economic boom around the world has been the effect of these so called "bubbles". Be it the dot.com bubble or more recently the housing bubble in America, every one of these bubbles flush the world economies with the much needed capitalization and in effect, prosperity. Unfortunately Bangladesh has time and again failed to capitalize on these bubbles, thus still lingering under the tag of "great potential." The fact that we have largely remained unaffected by the global economic downturn shows not of our sound economic policies but our exclusion from the mainstream world economy. Economies that take part in "bubble", rise together and fall together and again help each other rise to flourish in a new bubble. Those who seek to stay away can call themselves lucky but in reality they are ones who have lost

the most.

The new wave of change that will inevitably swoop the world makes it even more important for Bangladesh to be ready to finally realize its potential and for once do something about it. This is what makes the upcoming election, of utmost importance. Unless and until we have a "representative" government, whatever that may be, we will not be able to harness the endless new opportunities that will be presented in the coming years. Our new government maybe one of inefficiency but our people are one of hope and desire. From the villages to the cities and in every nook and cranny of the country, lies a slew of possibilities that I believe, we are finally ready to bring into effect. The Bangladeshi Diaspora around the world especially in America has been invigorated by the prospect of a new and bright future where leveraging their own countries potential seems not only lucrative but the right way to move forward. What has been missing for all these years has been the right message from the representative government in Bangladesh to provide this Diaspora with the right passage into the country, thus not only allowing them to elevate themselves to a greater level but also taking the country with them.

Let's look at the upcoming "Green Energy" bubble, which now seems inevitable. Bangladesh, although it might sound oxymoronic, has taken a positive step in the recent years to reduce the carbon emission in its environment. The elimination of two-stroke engines from the city streets and moving towards a cleaner natural gas propelled engine, is a right step towards the future.

Although, the exponentially growing oil prices played an important role in the mass conversion of vehicles in the streets to natural gas, we should see this as an opportunity to be an example to the world on how to curb our oil-engulfing appetite. In essence, we have the technology and what we need now is to make it better. It will have a two-fold effect on the country. First, it will make our environment cleaner and secondly it can be one of our greatest export success stories. The world is hungry for clean green energy and given that we have already taken a step towards that ahead of other countries, we are in a good position to leverage that advantage into something meaningful and effective. Subsidies will soon flood the American market for the discovery of the next big "clean energy" idea and I believe we can take advantage of that. Bangladeshis have a great acumen for innovation but what they lack is a driving force that takes that innovative acumen and turns it into a discovery. Just as the saying goes "If you build it, they will come", the people's government needs to build the field for new innovation. If the opportunities arise, the bright minds of our country will not only seek to leave the country for a better future but also put the home country first even if they are part of a Diaspora. Look no further for an example than our neighbours, India, who has time and again leveraged their Diaspora to be a leading player in the global economy. So, at this juncture of Change and Hope, let us put our country first for once and move as a team to ensure a brighter and a more affluent Bangladesh in every way. **Azeem Choudhury** One-mail

Election and corrupt politicians

Dr. Kamal Hossain, Gono Forum President and an eminent jurist while speaking in a discussion meeting organised by Peoples' Empowerment Trust on 17 November said that the culprits should not be allowed to stage a come back and participate in any election. We strongly support his views and request the political parties not to nominate them for any election. The nation is frustrated to observe the very behaviour of these so-called leaders. The world has changed but the mindset of Bangladeshi leaders has not changed. They still believe that there is no alternative to them. I believe the people wholeheartedly support Dr. Kamal's demand. **Shafiqul Islam, NY**

Party nomination

The political parties are now busy selecting the candidates for the upcoming parliamentary & upazila election. The past experience regarding the nomination for election is not encouraging, rather frustrating. The people of the land have observed and experienced undesirable and quite undemocratic things in the process of nomination. Bribery, selling of nomination widely known as "nomination trade" was much talked about before the scheduled 22nd January 2007 election. The people are more conscious today and days will come when people will reject the unethical and bad politics. We hope political parties will nominate good people only. **Mohd. Omar Faruq Khan** Gazipur

Tragic indeed

On 17th November on the last page of The Daily Star a headline drew my attention. But after reading the heading I became extremely emotional and disappointed and suddenly I said to myself Oh! No!! Not again!! After reading the entire news I came to know that a young girl of Gopalganj district named Lima had taken her life after continuous harassment & teasing of local goons. Such deaths must be prevented and the goons should not go unpunished. **Syed Nahid Hasan** Business Administration SUST

Political scene

Noting to predict now, just wait for the result. The British High Commissioner has no headache if the election is held under the state of emergency. By the way, it is funny to see that sensitivity of religion is mixed up with election date. The other day we saw a new sports federation under the banner of "Islamic Women Sports Federation". We are concerned, where are we going? **Areader** One-mail

GP and capital market

On November 11, 2008, GP New CEO said, "The shareholders of Grameenphone remain committed to the IPO, to develop the Bangladesh capital market and to share Grameenphone's success with its future shareholders." If they really want to do good things for Bangladesh, they should give the Internet facility to all suitable educational institutions of the country at a more reduced rate first. **Saif Tinku** Baridhara, Dhaka

BSF's shooting spree

We are again shocked at the killing of three Bangladeshi civilians by BSF, including a woman and a child at the Tentulia border recently. I don't know how India will behave with its small neighbours if it gets permanent membership in the UNSC!! We want friendship with India, and New Delhi should reciprocate. **M.K.U. Parvez** University of Manitoba Winnipeg Canada

Traffic issue



The problem persists. And people continue to suffer. We don't know how long this will continue.

The govt has to address the issue on a priority basis.

Fahim Faysal
Civil Aviation High School
Tejgaon, Dhaka

Think about it

Almighty God - our Lord promised, among other things, in Holy Quran: He will protect the Holy Quran. The event that reportedly took place recently in Hyderabad, India, bears inter alia testimony to the fact: how Almighty God has - once again - set a clear example with regard to fulfilment of His above promise before all His creatures, enabling them to witness it or to know about it or to internalise it otherwise, to take lesson from it, and to use it in pursuits of say, strengthening their trust in Him, to mention a few. A description of the event given by one, Mr. Naseer Ahmad Mughal via a google website posting has been presented below:

"In a house of one Mr. Mohammad Farooq of Tappachabutra, Hyderabad (India) termites gathered on a 100 year old Holy Quran. All the cover was damaged and box was damaged and even the Urdu translation was damaged but the termites did not touch the Arabic words of Holy Quran. This shows that the words of Almighty ALLAH are always preserved by Almighty ALLAH even the termites did

not damage the Arabic verses. Developments would inter alia be instrumental in reinforcing or renewing or activating or reactivating or creating or recreating - as appropriate - things, like:

1. The existence of Almighty God, and truth behind His Holy Utterances that have been communicated to humans.
2. The need for gearing up - to a humanly or otherwise possible extent and in a sustainable manner - research, development and engineering (RDE) pertaining to everything Almighty God has created so far - for promoting and sustaining individual, collective and other benefits of all concerned - for example.
3. Motivations for revisiting Almighty God's creation in pursuits of unearthing, understanding and internalizing - by all concerned.
4. Desires and efforts associated with praising our Lord in a manner that has got potentials for acceptance by Him as per hopes and expectations.
5. Initiatives and activities that could hopefully lead to ever improving communion between Almighty God and His creatures at various

levels of interaction - known or unknown or otherwise, conscious, subconscious or otherwise - within and beyond ongoing time, as well as space, among other things. The last word: let us accelerate efforts towards understanding Almighty God in a more meaningful and better way. **Dr. M. S. Haq** One-mail

Asad incident

A news item that was published in your daily on November 17, 2008 with the headline "Harassed, girl takes her life" caught my attention. I was sad and yet angry with the people for whom an innocent girl had to give her precious life. This is not a new story. It is happening in our society often but how long will we keep on seeing these barbaric attitudes of these characterless people? As long as we do not have effective laws in our society these incidents will keep on happening. The girl was an SSC examinee who took her own life when some boys repeatedly teased her. I urge the authorities to take appropriate steps against the culprits. **Minhaj Ahmed** Uttara, Dhaka

Power and responsibility

Either they do not understand or they do not want to understand that this is not only the chair of power but this also bears the responsibilities of entire populace. I am talking about our so-called politicians. These politicians like to promise thousands of times to commoners on different issues and among them most common and used words are... "People are the source of all power (whatever they cherish in their minds)" and we keep hearing if they get "power" they will do this or that for the people and so on.

Now it is time for the people to choose good people. **Sumona Sharmin** One-mail



RAJ ANIKATI DRIKNEWS

Appointment of judges

It is reported in the media that 7 new HC judges have been appointed by the CTG. No doubt this is a piece of good news. But the question is who are these honourable judges? We know that they have been processed through a system, the SJCh has nominated them to the President for appointment and the President has done so. Fine.

I would not have asked for such a scrutiny if we had a system to involve the parliamentary committee to scrutinize their record in a transparent manner.

The CTG is handling all outstanding issues so fast that it is becoming impossible to keep pace with their executive and political agenda. I do not know how much coordination and consensus is present in our present system of governance. I am curious to know whether we have district or any other quota which needs to be maintained while giving appointment to a constitutional post. **A curious citizen** One-mail

"Islamic" militants

I am writing this letter in reference to the recent report titled "Huge explosive haul after JMB men held" on Monday Nov 17 where the JMB members were referred to as "Islamic militants". I always wonder from where the word "Islamic militants" came and what is really meant by "Islamic militants" or "Islamic terrorists". Where in our religion it is mentioned how to be an "IS-

LAMIC militant or how to be an "ISLAMIC terrorist"? What is the "Islamic way" to kill people or do harm to others? Living abroad when I open newspapers or listen to the media I feel bad to hear the word "Islamic terrorist" but at the same time I feel that these people do not know much about this great religion so it is easy for them to label the terrorists as the way they are doing now. Once I had to speak to my child's school teacher regarding a handout given at school on 9/11 observance day where a picture showed an airplane being attacked by "Islamic terrorists". My little girl questioned me "mom who is a Islamic terrorist", Why are they calling this bad people as Islamic terrorists.

Terrorist are terrorist irrespective of race and religion. My poor child who is learning religion in a foreign land could not figure out why Islam would be called as such and she was ashamed, she was hurt.

The nicest teacher who never thought that the picture could be an issue realized the problem quickly and apologised. That's why I can't accept when these fanatics are named after this peaceful religion in a country where majority of the people practice Islam. It has become a trend to call them "Islamic..." as because they claim them as the 'Dharok and Bhahok' of Islam. All of us know that no where in Quran any killing like the one they are doing is given any sorts of allowance, rather that's the worst sin anyone can ever do in their lifetime. I would earnestly request all of you not to use the adjective "Islamic" prior to their design-

nation. Label them as just "Terrorist" who are trying to achieve their goal in the holy name of Islam by fooling people who has a soft but vulnerable heart for Islam. Please do not glorify them by calling "Islamic militants" anymore. **Latifa Kamal** USA

Dowry

Dowry is a curse of our society. It is destroying the lives of many women. Let us fight against it. **Sharif Md Abdullah** Dept. of Business Administration SUST Sylhet

Good decision

BNP led four party took decision to participate in the next national elections, realising the importance of holding the elections on time. We welcome the decision. **Tommy Anwar** Chairman, Inspiration Coaching Centre (ICC) Uttara, Dhaka

Opportunity for Jamaat

In recent times, the country has seen an important change that could have a far-reaching effect on the political culture in Bangladesh. The Jamaat-e-Islami has changed their party name and constitution to remain in conformity with the constitution of Bangladesh. Critics have argued that Jamaat has not changed their ideology although in writing they mention about democratic norms. Without arguing about their intention, I think we could at least wel-

come them for making these changes and hold them accountable if they go against their constitution. In this context, I have some concerns which needs be addressed by the party leaders of Jamaat. I believe the party could gain people's trust if they take necessary steps to show that their deeds reflect their words.

First, I am not sure why the word "Islami" was not dropped from the party name when it was being changed anyway. I think given the opportunity of non-Muslims to join the party, and the secular tone of the new party constitution after removal of all theological concepts, the party should seriously consider dropping the reference to Islam. For those of us who hold our religion dearly, it is sad to see that the name of Islam being exploited in such a manner.

Secondly, Jamaat has now acknowledged the struggle of the people in the liberation war, which is welcoming news. The party now has the opportunity to demonstrate to the people that they really are planning to become a pro-liberation political party. As a modest suggestion, I urge the party to take the initiative starting with the expulsion of the war criminals from the party.

If Jamaat brings forth these changes, then they could silence the skeptics and could bring a positive image for the party. Otherwise, their opponents, and above all, the people of Bangladesh could realize that they are set out to deceive people.

Towhid Salam Los Angeles California, US

Polythene menace

It is no more unknown to people how much disastrous the polythene bags are for our environment. The intriguing matter is that polythene bag is banned in our country. The present caretaker govt, since it took over, has brought many changes or at least tried to do so either by enacting laws or by amend-

ing provisions in the existing laws. But it is a matter of regret that they have given a complete blind eye to the violation of an existing law. When the whole world is getting interested in using environment friendly things in everyday life, our country is producing environment destroying polythene. People of

our country have a natural tendency to violate laws. So the govt should ensure the enforcement of the laws. We expect our govt will take necessary measures immediately to stop polythene production and sale.

Golam Mostofa Jahangirnagar University Savar, Dhaka

