

to lose their hope for a better Bangladesh. These young people represent 58% of the electorate who are tired of the age old rhetoric and are ready to roll up their sleeves to work hard and earn an honest living with the assurance that their hard work enabled by responsible politics and development will leave behind a more prosperous country for their children.

People my age, those still under 40 today (70% are below age 40) voted for the first time in 1991 when the entire country had many hopes after the struggle for democracy. Think about the frustration we are in today. When we look at today's 33% first time young voters, I can see how they will feel after 18 years if we now fail to bring about change.

If you compare the state of frustration and hopelessness today with those prevalent during the language movement in 1952, the liberation war in 1971 and the struggle for democracy in 1990, our hopelessness and uncertainty today is by no means any less. Two generations since 1990 have lost hope and have been disappointed and have seen their hopes and aspirations put on the back burner.

History has put us at a crossroads again and it is time for our generation to rise to the occasion and face the challenge with courage and determination to bring about