expect to have detailed information on the MPs and have demanded that information regarding their earnings and their dependents be submitted and be made public every year. They also want that each parliamentary session be directly aired through state and private media.

A strong local government has been a longtime dream of the people and the survey shows that people expect that MPs refrain from directly controlling development activities of their constituencies -- a common practice of the past when MPs would be too busy consolidating their influence in their constituencies to ensure future votes instead of attending parliamentary duties. In fact, respondents have expressed that MPs of both ruling and opposition parties cannot be absent for more than thirty days and that too only due to illness or because of important work of the state. An attendance register of the MPs has to be made publicly available each year. Cuts in pay should be introduced for those who have not taken permission from the parliament to be absent.

People must have access to their MPs. Each MP should maintain an office in his or her constituency and be present there except when he or she has to attend parliamentary sessions or is engaged in important state work.

A neutral speaker is crucial for the parliament to work. The speaker must resign from his party and he may be given the assurance that there will be no other candidate except him in his constituency in the following elections. The Deputy Speaker should be selected from the opposition bench.

The survey also found that people want that the ruling party will ensure proper participation of opposition MPs in the parliament. The opposition must use constructive criticism of the government.

The standing committees are the centre of parliamentary activities where the nitty-gritty of policy issues are thrashed out. Making these committees fair and effective is essential to the democratic process. The survey shows that people want these committees to be strong; a minister cannot be part of a committee that decides on a particular ministry and more than 50 percent of the committee members should comprise opposition members.

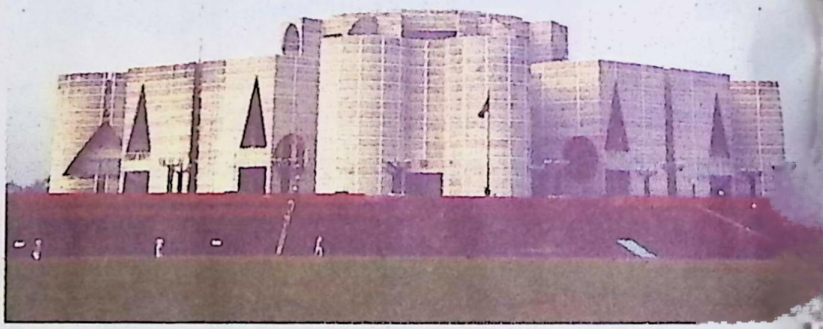
People want an end to the practice of prolonged boycotting the parliament by the opposition although walkouts are an acceptable means of protest.

Before passing a law, people want to know about it through websites or published material and discussions about it have to be held.

The people want an end to the practice of taking disputes outside the parliament. Disagreements must be talked out and resolved within the parliament.

Respondents have also expressed the hope that all the reserved seats for women be filled by directly elected MPs.

Our greatest disappointment can be summed up in the utter misuse of this great institution by our elected parliamentarians who have abused their power to the extreme and made a mockery of our precious votes.



Standing committees for upholding the interests of ethnic and religious minorities as well as marginalised groups have to be created so that it can assess whether new laws or amendments to old ones are in tune with the rights of these people.

Political parties must practice democracy within the party if they want to be credible in the eyes of the public. People want that political parties give nominations from the grassroots level and honour suggestions from them.

MPs must make concerted efforts to bring issues concerning religious minorities and other marginalised groups to the forefront.

The position of an Ombudsman has to be created and filled. The Ombudsman will listen to public complaints against parliamentarians who have misused their power or failed to adhere to parliamentary codes of conduct, and take appropriate action.

People have also demanded that all MPs, the government and political parties will be obligated to make sure that other institutions of government such as the Anti-corruption Commission, Election Commission, Law Commission, the Public Service Commission, Justice