

situation has however changed over the years. Now the ranks of most of the big student organisations are swarmed with individuals who have parted with pen and paper long ago, instead they have businesses of their own and are parents of grown-ups who go to colleges. One reason why student politics has been taken hostage by some corrupt leaders is because all the student organisations in the country work as parasites of the political parties and are incapable of functioning independently.

Sheikh Hasina must know that photos of machete-wielding young men chasing each other on the campus make a mockery of her dream of digital Bangladesh. Her dream of bringing about a change in our social and political life will turn into a nightmare if the police do not launch a crackdown on some of the BCL leaders who have turned universities into battlefields.

The AL, BNP and other political parties must seriously consider abolishing their student fronts. The BCL has a long chequered history of being one of the frontrunners of the country's independence struggle; the organisation must be allowed to work as an independent entity; its leadership needs to reorganise itself to rebuild it in the spirit of the four pillars of the constitution of 1972. If other student organisations are freed from the clutches of their mother organisations and the law enforcing agencies are allowed to work freely in different educational institutions, gradually the good apples of student politics will be able to drive the bad apples out.

In the run up to the last general elections Sheikh Hasina has shown statesmanship to steer her party towards a resounding victory. Now that she has the nation's mandate it is time Hasina rises up to the challenge and bring peace to the campus. ■