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Statements by our leaders



We Bangladeshis are a naïve bunch of simple-minded people. We succumb so easily to the glib promises of our rulers and vote them again and again to power. Four decades ago, we did confront the foreign despots and at great cost gained freedom. But there has been no respite from anti-people statements and actions since.

- A few examples in support of the above view:
1. A minister advising the malnourished people to eat less.
 2. Another wants extortion to be legalised to benefit his own unions.
 3. The same leader is happy to give license to his illiterate truck/bus drivers, if they can “differentiate between a goat and a cow”.
 4. The minister responsible for our safety does not know that our burglars know more about locks than her cops!
 5. The finance minister declares that he is responsible for 30% of BD's micro-credit, the 'blood sucker' for only 12%!
 6. Reports of financial scams, extra-judicial deaths, frequent foreign junkets, court orders, land grabbing, traffic jams, etc, have been regular affairs.
 7. Our one and only nationally and internationally acclaimed personality has been subjected to mean, vindictive and revengeful beyond comprehension.
- Don't the people in power ever read The Daily Star polls?

Sikander Ahmed
Kisangoro, Mombasa
Kenya

Thank you, minister

It was on Wednesday 22nd August 2012, I was watching NTV news. Obaidul Qadir, minister for roads and railways was talking to a journalist. He said, “Despite my best efforts, I know people still faced delays, disruptions and sufferings. I apologise to them”.

This is something very unusual in Bangladesh for a minister to apologise like that. He tried to share the sufferings of the common people. By doing so, Obaiful Qadir has taken a bold step forward. He set up a new standard. He has taken a position high above in the minds of the common people. I congratulate him. I hope this will set a new standard of relationship between the common people and their elected ministers.

Fazlur Chowdhury
Ilford, Essex, IG1 3SJ, UK

Why do we need a minister without portfolio?

Can we really afford to employ a minister without portfolio in the cabinet of our prime minister? Does not it look like a poor nation spending lavishly? A minister in the cabinet has to be paid a handsome salary, needs a Pajero, a house and several men for security and household purposes -- all of these at public expense. In a country where millions of people cannot manage three basic meals a day, how can the government spend that much for a minister who is not required in the cabinet? In Bangladesh there are highly educated and conscious people who are able to understand the wrong decisions taken by the government but. Bur government doesn't bother at all.

Kazi Mizanur Rahman

Implement the ban on smoking

Our law minister has told the journalists that he would increase the fine from taka 50 to taka 500 for smoking publicly. If this law is enforced, he will be highly praised by the non-smokers all over Bangladesh.

Every day, especially in the evening when one goes for a walk, one would find at least 50 out of 100 people smoking publicly. I find it quite baffling when I see even police officers smoke publicly. People smoke everywhere as if this country entirely belongs to the smokers. To make things worse, lots of people smoke in front of gas stations risking the lives of the vehicle drivers and the passengers standing in queues for taking gas. I would urge the government to enforce the law as soon as possible.

Badal Hasib
SIBT University College
Sylhet



A black day for the poorest

It is unbelievable that the world famous Bangladesh Grameen Bank is being discredited by its own government.

About thirty years ago, Prof Yunus began to form GB which now allows millions of the poorest families around the world to access life saving small loans for income generation, giving them a chance to grow themselves out of extreme poverty. As the women board members of GB Bangladesh deemed essential, bank savings accounts and insurance policies are also available for the poorest -- things never available to them previously,(and which wealthy people take for granted).

The GB website -- www.grameen.com-- shows the amazing array of extra services and innovations currently available in different countries both developed and developing.

I will write to my government and our Prime Minister here in Australia asking them to communicate with the government of Bangladesh, expressing extreme concern at the current actions in relation to the bank.

I will also write to the Bangladesh government to be a voice for the poorest women, men and children who will want to benefit from the Grameen Bank in the future - for their future wellbeing.

Sue Packham
14 Edward Court Woolamai
Victoria 3995
Australia

Our proud prime minister

Our prime minister proudly disclosed to the world that despite worldwide recession, Bangladesh was enjoying a growth rate of 6/7 percent, in her interview with the world renowned journalist Stephen Sackur of BBC.

It was very shocking to see in the electronic media that people were killing their near and dear ones, just on the eve of holy Eid-ul-Fitr, driven by extreme poverty. Only a couple of weeks ago, Sheikh Hasina disclosed her personal cell numbers and email address in both print and electronic media so that people could reach her directly, bypassing the official formalities.

Why have those unfortunate people taken the lives of their near and dear ones, having failed to meet their minimal demands? Sheikh Hasina attended both the opening and closing ceremonies of the recently held Olympics along with her son Sajeeb Wajed Joy and perhaps her sister Sheikh Rehana who happens to live in London at public expense.

What was the total amount spent for these unproductive purposes? Was it enough to save those poor lives and others like them languishing in extreme poverty? Had Sheikh Hasina spent that money for the welfare of those ill-fated people, perhaps they would have lived and celebrated the holy Eid-ul-Fitr with their families.

Saleh Mohammad Ayub

Focus on sustainable energy

Science and technology is advancing day by day. With the advancement of modern technology, human life is getting more comfortable. We are using many technologies that need no physical effort. Without these life would be possible but we would possibly be living in the Stone Age.

But we don't seem to bother about our environment. We can not ignore the fact that the earth is getting warmer each day. Every day with the constant production of energy, the environment is being endangered. We cannot minimise our energy consumption overnight, neither can we live without technology. We have to focus on developing sustainable and renewable energy for a sustainable environment, because if the environment is jeopardised, millions of lives on earth will be endangered

Cantara Wali Ruhi
On e-mail



PHOTO: DRINKNEWS

Mystery of life

Sometimes when I am writing letters, reading books, or doing some chores, I have to stop in my track wondering, who am I? What am I doing here? Everything is so mysterious.

A few verses from poet and philosopher Omar Khayyam comes to my mind. These are: "Why have we come to this world, from where and what for? When a sunflower opens its petals by the warm touch of the morning sun, Sheuli at that time falls to the ground in silent pain."

Another poet (I have forgotten his name) wrote in one of his poems: "Is this life or a storm? We are going to die in the hands of life. When we came in this world, we cried a little, now we are getting drenched all over."

When I look around, I see people of all ages and feel sad thinking that every one of them will die someday.

I see sufferings all around me, mental and physical. Why do people have to suffer like this? I do not know the answer. May the Almighty Creator help us all.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Remove traffic jam in phases

Already Dhaka -- a mega city -- is having many problems. Of them, traffic jam is the most pathetic one. Having an overwhelmingly big population is regarded as the number one problem of this country, but traffic jam is the number one problem of Dhaka city. It now seems that traffic jam is a never-ending problem. Almost every person who commutes through the Dhaka roads has to waste time and energy every day due to hours of tailbacks. Time is the most valuable thing on earth. But we are simply losing it every day because of the traffic jams. There are numerous reasons for traffic jams. The authorities, surely, are not unaware of the phenomena that hinder the smooth transportation of vehicles. So I would earnestly request the ministry concerned to take step by step actions against the barriers to smooth movement of traffic and thus help our economy boost.

Md. Ahsanul Kabir Palash
Department of Marketing
University of Dhaka

No more promises, please

Some of our political leaders of BNP, AL and other parties talk too much and make promises every now and then. But they never keep their words.

Can they kindly avoid making promises and talk less and be reasonable?

O H Kabir

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star news report headlined “Yunus slated by 51 noted citizens”

Schnapps

Once again, shame on Bangladesh government!

Tuhin

Why are they not showing their concern about Padma bridge graft?

Mizan Rahman

Dr Yunus has received the highest honours from national and international forums. We hope he will come forward to solve the national crisis.

A Bangalee

We reject their views.

Md. Ashikur Rahman

It is impossible to accept such statement.

Barrister Abu Ahsan, London

Their concern would not matter at all to the international community. We, the common people, are seeing what injustice the government is doing to the Nobel laureate and Grameen Bank.

Ahsan khan Chowdhury

Dr Yunus got Nobel Peace Prize but I think he brought no peace for Bangladesh. He exploited the poor women of Bangladesh.

Nazrul Islam

These so-called intellectuals are beneficiaries of the government. They don't have any contribution in building the country's economy. They even support all the wrongdoings of the government. They didn't give any statement regarding Padma bridge scam, Sagor-Runi killing, Tipaimukh dam, etc.

Saleh Md. Shahriar

We respect the 51 eminent citizens who are the signatories to the joint statement. Of course, a patriotic person can never support any sorts of conspiracy that might harm the country's democracy. But the joint statement is similar to the ruling party's statement. The most interesting thing is the statement is ambiguous as it does not clarify the nature of the "conspiracy," as claimed by the signatories.

Pradeep Kaur

The whole world thanks and praises Prof Yunus and those so-called eminent citizens of Bangladesh are saying otherwise!

T. Raiden

They only care for their own interest; they don't care for the country. These people never expressed their concern over share market scam, law and order deterioration, presidential pardon for killers and so on.

Merryna Parveen

The combined contribution of these 51 citizens would not equal or even come near Dr. Yunus's contribution. Dr Yunus made resources available to the poor people that were not available to them earlier. Grameen Bank was a revolution engineered by Dr. Yunus. There is no scope for belittling his contribution.

Mohammad Zahinul Islam

So sad to see that all these free minds are not free anymore.

Truth Teller

I would like to know how many of these eminent citizens condemned the government's move to destroy Grameen Bank. Then there is another question: How do they know that Nobel laureate Dr Yunus is using "super power" to put pressure on the country?

Fuad Hasan

We know why they gave the statement suddenly.

Shafqat Anwar

My question is why these intellectuals remain silent during all other national crises? Why don't they raise their voice against Farakka, Tipaimukh, and Teesta issues? Why don't they protest the murder of journalists, rampant corruption in the country, and arbitrary termination of caretaker government provision? Is Professor Yunus the only problem to them? History will judge this episode regarding Dr Yunus and Grameen Bank.

Asma Tuhin