

House speaker John Boehner hands Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, the Congressional Gold Medal as House Minority Leader and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi watches. PHOTO: AFP

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Mandela to John Kerry, the Grameen Bank episode has been condemned by all world leaders. Its female clients have pleaded with the government not to remove its founder from the bank. Everything fell on deaf ears. To make matters even worse, the AL and its pet intellectuals started a vicious yet strange smear campaign against Yunus and micro-credit. All intended to belittle his achievements. It did not work, it seems. In fact, it never worked in the past. History be our guide, vilifying someone in such a dastardly manner usually backfires.

It is no less than ironic that the AL has quite successfully made an enemy out of Yunus. It was not meant to be like this: Yunus's worldview – a just non-communal society free from poverty and exploitation--fits the AL's bill quite well. By humiliating Yunus the AL has shot itself in the foot.

It is however never too late to know that extending an olive branch to the person whom the world respects will do the AL good. The government should take the initiative to involve Yunus into the decision making process of Grameen. It can form a council of elders where eminent personalities such as Muhammad Yunus and Fazle Hasan Abed can give the nation advice regarding the pressing issues that it is facing. We need a visionary like Yunus at this critical juncture of history to guide us through the impasse that has threatened to choke the very foundation of our nation's existence. The world has claimed Muhammad Yunus, but he is ours, too.