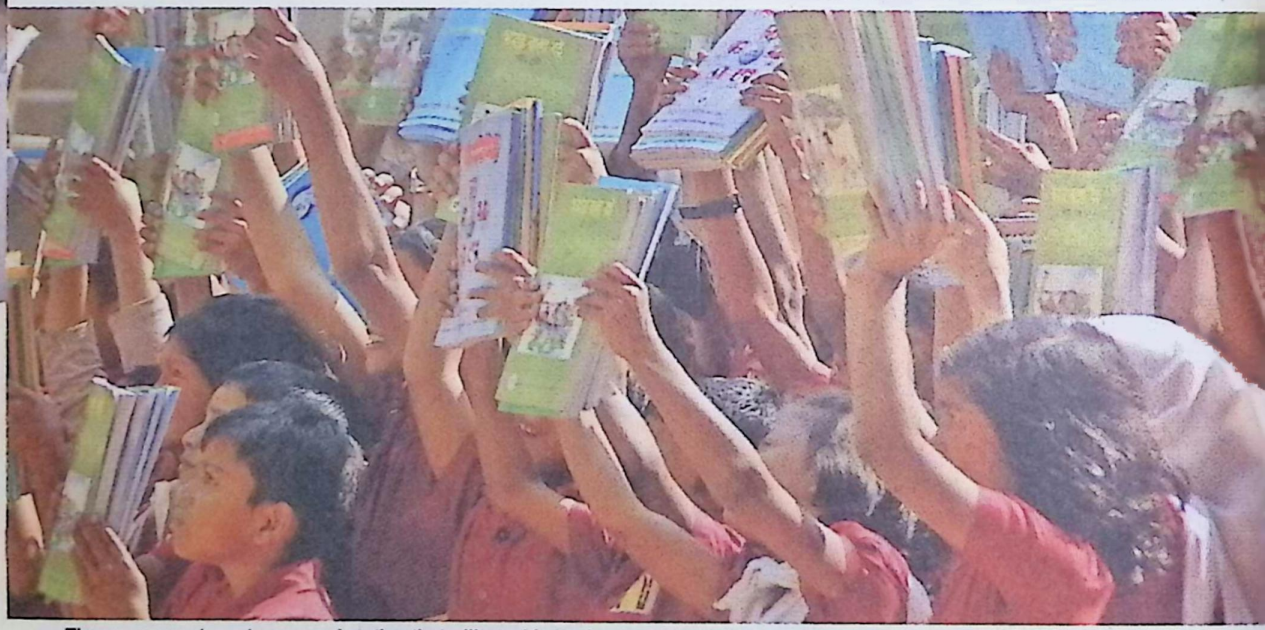
Fixing Unruly Politics and Policies

IQBAL AHMED

parties are aligned with the constitutional requirements. The transparency and accountability must be in place to monitor the due process at all levels of the political structure – from union parishads to upazilla parishads, from district-level power to national-level power. But this bottom-up approach of realigning the political system would require institutionalising commitments of the party leaders with our cultural and traditional values, and, most importantly, the stake of the country. The central government must distribute power to all levels of local bureaucracies incrementally and ensure that the powers have been facilitated and utilised. Additionally, the local and national entities must become financially solvent and independent through creating opportunities for development initiatives.



The government must ensure education that will provide students with analytical and problem solving skills. PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

The current political conditions that have unfolded since the execution of Quader Mollah have become a crucial litmus test once again.

The controversial January 5 election has taken place despite and amidst violence and political rhetoric between the incumbent Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, and the opposition leader, Begum Khaleda Zia.

So, what can be done to reform politics and policies in Bangladesh? Many demand a change in the leadership of the parties. The current technocrats, bureaucrats, and politicians are getting old. The younger generations have shown promise and hope of reform but they lack leadership. There seems to be no easy answer.

The new government must aim to reform the democratic process of our constitution and political climate. This would require examining validity and activities of the political institutions, from grass-roots to top level, to ensure that the political

Tackling corruption, on the other hand, would require a top-down approach, which means the government in power must set goals and objectives to contain and handle corruption starting from its upper echelons and below. Corruption is a social ill in Bangladesh. It exists everywhere – public, private, and NGO sectors. Blaming politicians alone for corruption would be unjust. But it can be argued that the politicians have created a toxic political environment where corruption thrives.

One way to alleviate corruption would be to discourage political parties from blaming each other for corruption. For example, when Awami League (AL) is in power, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) incessantly points fingers to AL for widespread corruption and vice versa. Instead of pointing fingers, actions must be taken by the leaders of the political parties to take and accept responsibility and criticism for corruption.