A Failed Adventure

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Under the leadership of Khaleda Zia, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party is now facing an unprecedented debacle in its 36-year-old existence. It happened due to some wrong political strategies. The party had followed an adventurous strategy to foil the January 5 parliamentary election. It failed miserably. The failure has ousted Khaleda and her party from the parliamentary politics, first time in the last two decades since the restoration of democracy in 1990. And Khaleda personally has become the top loser in this game. In over the past two decades, she had enjoyed state facilities either being the Prime Minister or the leader of the opposition in the parliament. But this time, she is nobody in the new parliament formed through the January 5 one-sided polls. The Awami League-led government, of course, will leave no stone unturned to stay in office for a full five-year term. If the AL succeeds, it will keep Khaleda and her party BNP out of power around 12 years in a row. And if it happens, this will be the longest ever time for the BNP to stay out of power.

Khaleda, who appeared as an "uncompromising leader" during the street agitation against the Ersahd's autocrat regime, is now facing massive challenges which she never experienced in her three-decade-long political career. Her leadership has apparently collapsed. Her uncompromising image did not work this time. She might have forgotten that she had waged a movement against a democratically elected government-led by her archrival Sheikh Hasina. In democracy, a politician must learn how to make compromise through negotiations. Compromises are considered an art in democracy. But Khaleda tried to reappear as an "uncompromising" leader and thus failed to cash in on Hasina's offer to hold talks over the formation of an election time government. She also rejected Hasina's offer to nominate her BNP MPs to the election time cabinet. She could have played the trump card by demanding some vital ministerial portfolios for her party leaders in the election time cabinet. Hasina had made a blank offer to Khaleda, which Khaleda did not consider. She vehemently rejected the offer. And she remained rigid in her stance on the installation of a non-partisan individual as the chief of the election time cabinet.

Shunning the path of compromise, she chose