

Chaos is a ladder



H. M. Nazmul Alam is an academic, journalist, and political analyst. He can be reached at nazmulalam.rijohn@gmail.com.

H. M. NAZMUL ALAM

In the chaos that has engulfed Bangladesh, the events of the past few days resemble the grim narratives of political intrigue and moral decay found in the most captivating of fictional tales. In *Game of Thrones*, Petyr Baelish, known as Littlefinger, proclaimed: "Chaos isn't a pit. Chaos is a ladder. Many who try to climb it fail and never get to try again. The fall breaks them. And some are given a chance to climb, but they refuse. They cling to the realm, or the gods, or love... illusions. Only the ladder is real. The climb is all there is." This philosophy—where disorder serves as an opportunity rather than an obstacle—is chillingly relevant to what is unfolding in Bangladesh today.

A nation that once stood on the pillars of its hard-fought independence now finds itself in a whirlpool of anarchy. The recent wave of protests, vandalism, and arson directed at establishments linked to the ousted Awami League reflects more than just frustration—it signifies a power vacuum, an opportunity for new players to rise. Like in Littlefinger's philosophy, the opportunists of our time are not looking to stabilise the chaos but to exploit it, to climb to positions of power and influence, while the common people bear the brunt of instability.

As students and citizens take to the streets, setting ablaze structures symbolic of political dominance,

the question arises: what is the endgame? Is this an organic outburst against oppression, or is it the strategic dismantling of an old order to make way for a new one? This is where Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight* trilogy offers a poignant analogy.

In *The Dark Knight Rises*, Bane, the revolutionary anarchist, speaks of giving power back to the people. Yet, his ultimate goal is the total destruction of Gotham. His brand of chaos is one that seduces the desperate and downtrodden into believing in justice while, in reality, it serves his own thirst for vengeance and control. Similarly, in Bangladesh, we must ask: who benefits from this upheaval? The students and common people leading the charge may believe they are fighting for justice, but history teaches us that revolutions often create vacuums that are quickly filled by new oppressors.

Littlefinger's philosophy suggests that the chaos itself is a mechanism to enable those with ambition to rise. It is a ruthless reality where idealists are crushed beneath the weight of calculated opportunism. When disorder reigns, it is not necessarily the just who prevail, but rather the cunning.

From history to fiction, power vacuums have always been exploited by those who see chaos as a means rather than a tragedy. In *Batman Begins*, Ra's al Ghul aims to destroy

Gotham because he believes it has become corrupt beyond redemption. Yet, it is Bruce Wayne, as Batman, who realises that true justice is not about annihilation but restoration. Today, Bangladesh stands at a crossroads. Will this turmoil lead to true reform, or will it merely replace one form of tyranny with another? Historically, those who claim

power dynamics—these are not just spontaneous acts of rebellion; they appear to be calculated moves in a larger game.

Consider the ousted ruling party: once powerful, now embattled. Its fall is reminiscent of those who cling to the illusions Littlefinger described—whether it be the illusion of control, of loyalty, or of

their rule be any different? History warns us that those who seize power in moments of chaos rarely return it to the people. The Taliban in Afghanistan, the Jacobins in revolutionary France, the Bolsheviks in Russia—all rose from disorder promising justice, only to impose regimes as brutal as the ones they replaced.

crush them. The anger of students, the frustration of workers, and the disillusionment of common citizens are all being manipulated by unseen hands. The same masses who set fire to the halls of power may later find themselves trapped in the flames of a new tyranny.

Even in fictional Gotham, Bruce Wayne realised that fighting crime with crime, or injustice with more injustice, was a self-defeating cycle. The real solution was to offer a vision beyond the flames. Bangladesh today needs that vision. It needs leadership that does not see the chaos as a ladder but as a warning—a reminder that if the root causes of unrest are not addressed, the country will remain in a perpetual cycle of destruction and exploitation.

What is most concerning is the absence of a coherent alternative. If the current establishment fails, what replaces it? The opportunists will surely rise, but will they govern justly? Without a clear plan, without a commitment to actual reform, the fires burning across the country will not mark the end of oppression but merely the start of another chapter of turmoil.

We must ask ourselves: Who are the Littlefingers of Bangladesh? Who is manipulating the chaos for personal gain? And who, if anyone, is truly fighting for justice rather than just another throne? If Bangladesh does not answer these questions soon, it risks plunging into a deeper abyss—one where the cycle of power-hungry opportunists never ends.

Chaos is not inherently liberating. It is merely a tool—one that, if left unchecked, benefits only those who know how to wield it. As Bangladesh stands on the brink, its people must decide: will they build a future from the ashes, or will they merely provide the stepping stones for another generation of rulers who see only the ladder?



Bangladesh needs leadership that does not see chaos as a ladder to climb to power.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

to fight against dictatorship often use the disorder to build their own thrones. Already, we see actors in Bangladesh manoeuvring to position themselves advantageously amid the chaos. The burning of houses and murals, the tearing down of symbols, the aggressive restructuring of

permanence in power. But if the fall of one regime is inevitable, who is climbing in its place?

Oppositions, long silenced, see this as their moment to step forward. Various factions—some with new system, some fundamentalist—are poised to fill the gap. But will

In *The Dark Knight*, the Joker thrives on chaos, exposing how easily people abandon morality when faced with fear. The greatest tragedy in Bangladesh's current predicament is that the very people who demand justice may unwittingly be fuelling a machine that will later

Is there an economic roadmap of the interim government?



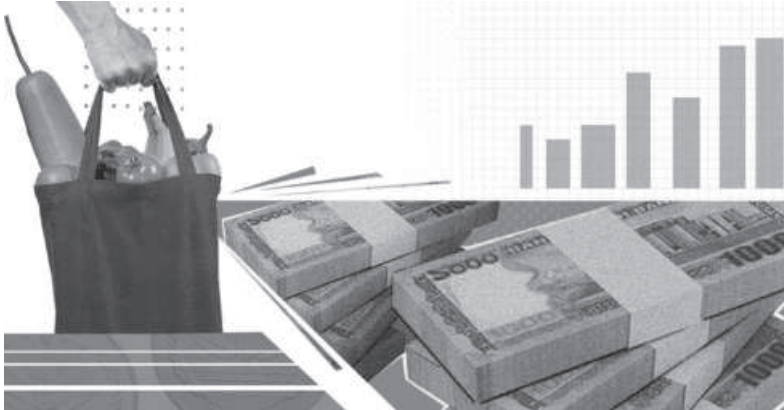
Selim Jahan is director of the Human Development Report Office and lead author of the Human Development Report.

SELIM JAHAN

The interim government of Bangladesh has recently completed its six months in office. Because of certain measures it took at the outset of its tenure, people became somewhat hopeful about the government's good intentions. But as days passed, certain things became clearer. First, it became apparent that the government was not able to solve the problems disrupting the lives of the people. In fact, it was apparent that the government was severely struggling to cope with those challenges. The prime example is economy's persistent high inflation. Second, the mismanagement that characterised the past economy was not over. Thus, an even economic discipline is yet to return, not to speak of economic acceleration. Third, the interim government does not have a clear road map to put the economy on a solid foundation and to steer it forward.

All these phenomena have created a shaky confidence and a sense of despair in people's minds, which now have taken the form of discontent. People are at a loss and cannot fathom that in spite of the presence of so many notable, efficient and experienced luminaries in the government, it is not able to tackle economic challenges. People surely do not expect that all the economic problems would be solved overnight, but they can hope for some improvements and reliefs—at least by the end of six months. Instead, the efficacy of various policy measures undertaken by the government have been questioned. For example, what is the rationale of imposing value-added taxes and supplementary duties on more than 100 items (some essentials were later removed from the list after much criticism), when there has already been a double-digit inflation and sluggish growth in the economy? In fact, at various points in time, people quite clearly expressed that economic issues are the topmost concerns on their minds. Not only people on the street, but also those closely associated with the government have started raising their voices about the government's

indifference and ineffective actions on economic issues. People involved with the White Paper have also expressed their despair. Furthermore, the main political parties of the country have also expressed some



FILE VISUAL: REHNUMA PROSHOON

dissatisfactions by the shortcomings of the government. Given all these, certain issues need to be clarified in the context of economic programmes of the interim government.

First, there is no doubt that Bangladesh has been passing through a transition and as a nation, we have been facing multidimensional challenges—some political, some are related to public administration, some are economic. While the interim government are obliged to give attention to all these concerns, a balance must be maintained in approaching them. But from what is happening, it seems that the government is not as interested in economic matters as it is in political issues. As a result, it is not spending much time on economic issues, compared to the time it devotes to political concerns. The perception seems to be that reforming the economy is the sole responsibility of the talented and widely experienced economists at the top of the government. This is, to be honest, a wrong and not so well-thought approach. If the entire administration of the interim government is not collectively engaged in economic management, the economy will not be fixed.

Second, in addressing and finding solutions for the economic problems, the government must strongly express its commitment to economic concerns. But unfortunately, the actions undertaken so far by the interim government are not creating that kind of a sense. Till now, the government's economic acts give a sense of "some measures here, some reforms there" sort of disparate attempts, and the government must move away from such ad hoc approach. In fact, ad hoc measures provide no relief to the problems, not to speak of solutions. The current high inflation of the country is a prime

example of such a phenomenon. In fact, a well-coordinated approach is required to overcome economic woes. At the same time, the interim government must refrain from undertaking inadequate measures, which in fact, may deepen the crises, making them more complex. Such acts by the government make its good intentions, commitments and good considerations irrelevant.

Third, in the economic arena, the government should concentrate on two specific issues—economic management and economic reforms. Both of these dimensions will help the Bangladesh economy to accelerate. In economic management, it is essential to re-establish economic discipline, the check and balances of the economic structure, and the culture of transparency and accountability. During its tenure, the interim government are neither expected nor supposed to complete all kinds of economic reforms. In that context, the government has to make a conscious decision as to which reforms it would prioritise, what would be the context and the content of those reforms, and also what would be the time frames for those reforms. Many structural reforms, particularly the long-term

economic ones, would have to be left for an elected government, as those reforms would have constitutional implications. The economic reforms that the interim want to pursue must be brought to the attention of the people with necessary transparency. This is critically important, since no reform can be sustainable without the ownership of the people.

Four, the interim government should present a well-thought blueprint of its economic plan with a spelled-out timeframe. In the pursuit of establishing a society, based on human rights and equality, the major milestones of such a blueprint must

also be identified. One important aspect of the blueprint would be an implementation plan with a definite monitoring and evaluation framework. For that, a necessary, robust and credible data set must be mobilised and constructed; so that a good baseline is created for credible monitoring and evaluation outcomes.

Five, it should be realised that having eminent, knowledgeable and experienced people at the top economic leadership of the interim government may be a necessary condition, but not a sufficient one for solving economic woes. A personality-based structure, irrespective of how talented these

people are in it, will not produce the desired results. Only if such eminent personalities are surrounded by skilled professionals and experts of economic discipline, the desired good outcomes would be achieved. Only a well-knit and coherent team can collectively tackle the economic problems of the country.

A clearly defined economic roadmap with a timeframe can strengthened the trust and confidence of the people in the interim government. And at the same time, this will enhance people's ownership of the proposed development trajectory of the country and in the ultimate analysis, there is no alternative to such ownership.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

District Primary Education Office

Patuakhali

www.dpe.patuakhali.gov.bd

Memo No: dpeo/patua/eprocure/furniture/2025/248

Date: 09/02/2025

e-Tender Notice No. 01/2024-25

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following works:

SL No	Name of Scheme	Tender ID NO	Package No	Tender/ Proposal Document Last selling/ downloading Date & Time	Tender/ Proposal Closing & Opening Date & Time	Tender Method	Remarks
1.	Goods, Supply of Furniture for 19 Nos Class Room of selected 05 Nos of Newly Nationalized Govt. Primary School Constructed under NBIDNNGPSP- 1 Project at Different location (Bauphal- 01, Mirzagonj- 02 & Patuakhali Sadar- 02) in Patuakhali District FY: 2024-2025	1070134	e-Tender NBIDNNGPSP1/ PAT/2024-25G1.14	26 February 2025, 17.00	27 February 2025, 14.00	OTM	

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no off line/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for tender / proposal document to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(Molla Baktiar Rahman)

District Primary Education Officer

Patuakhali.

Ph- 02478835640

Email- dpeopatua@gmail.com

GD- 390