

Politics in Bangladesh

Poor politics exacerbates poverty

There are two major political party in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is the right winger and the Awami League (AL) left winger. Among the rest of small 100 parties, two most important minor parties are Jammat-e-Islami (JI) and Islamia Oikka Jote (IOJ), who are normally the right winger and defined for an increased role of Islam in public life. The other important minor party is founded by ex-military ruler General Ershad which is called Jatiya Party (JP). The JP is ideologically not very different from AL and BNP, but operates independently. Bangladesh is a parliamentary democracy with a culture of reasonably free, fair and transparent election. Opposition of government party is often displayed through a violent demonstration including strikes, hartal etc. As mentioned before BNP and AL are two major parties. While one is in power and the other is in opposition, which gets involved in demonstration. Recently the opposition parties are more or less 30% or are too small to fight in the parliament. So the opposition boycott the parliamentary session. Trade-union and student wings mirror the political inclination of the parent parties. Activities of the officiated political wings are more confrontational than positive. Quite a few of the affiliated political wings including political workers, labor class, student fornts etc have been or can be arranged to demonstrate for a lot of negative action, including extortion, land-grabbing, attacking the media and journalist and violently opposing dissenting views. The party in power unlawfully misuse the state resources to obtain their own gain and to suppress the opposition activities. It is also very unfortunate to see that opposition to the ruling government policies are often mis-defined as anti-state action. The state police machinery is misused to make politically motivated arrest and repression of opposition members. The local representative government is not well developed in rural areas. The Union Parishad is unable to challenge the domination of central government and they are not democratically accountable. The political environment in Bangladesh has been

polluted. Political profession is to serve the country and benefit the people. Recently we cannot think of doing any politics without a hope of earning money. Politics in Bangladesh have become criminalized. The recent politics in Bangladesh is in operation as if it is an inherited property. Such as the Awami League (AL) is led by the daughter of the then President Sheikh Muzibur Rahman and the BNP is under the supervision of the wife of the former President Ziaur Rahman. It may be noted that the above two families have the main role play to continue the politics in Bangladesh as an inherited property. Many more common people of the conservative family in Bangladesh have been delighted to traditionally support this culture of inherited politics. They would not want to see any new face in politics. According to many, the political environment in Bangladesh of 160 million people is one of the World's worst politics. In Bangladesh democracy, the opposition traditionally becomes too small to fight the political party in power. Over majority in the political party makes them very inhuman to suppress and oppress the opposition in a very brutal way they want.

If the politics in Bangladesh is not free of corruption, insincerity, dishonesty and immorality, it would be very hard for the economy to grow and develop. The distribution of income will be deteriorated. Poverty would be worsen. In the face of shortage of the electricity, gas, oil, broken roads, bridge and culverts, the domestic and foreign investment has been decreasing. In this regime of political instability foreigners do not feel secured enough to invest in Bangladesh. Demonstration of labor and trade union has been a good reason for the significant backlog for many industries including the Ready Made Garments (RMG) in particular. Many importers of Bangladeshi garments including USA and European Union have been expressing their concern about labor unrest and non-congenial working environment in the export industry and the RMG sector. Altogether including the political instability have not been working for Bangladesh to achieve the real GDP growth of 7.2% in the forth coming fiscal

budget of 2012-13. The capital city of Bangladesh is in great wretched problem of broken road and jammed due to natural disaster, long lying road jam and political and non-political demonstration nation wide and in the industrial cities and Dhaka in particular.

Commitment of the political party in power does not work very well. It has also not been working during the present regime of the government (2009-2014). For example, commitment of Padma bridge, Cornofali bridge, Dhaka-Chittagong-Dhaka four-lane road including the other road and development of railway truck - - all have been stuck. Additionally the fly-over project in Dhaka city and the proposed metro sub-way Airport to Komalapur have also got stuck. The problems of gas, oil, electricity have been a great constraint to the industrial development and made the people's life and living very miserable. Among the other commitments including fair prices of quality goods and services of necessity in life and prices of food and fuel in particular and the chronic power-cuts, load-shedding and promises of new road and road repair - - all are in great problem. According to many, none of the above mentioned infrastructural problems for industrial development and the survival of the nation cannot be resolved shortly or in a year or two.

Prof. Dr. M. Azizur Rahman
Vice-Chancellor
Uttara University