



CITIZENS' DIALOGUE-NARAYANGANJ

NATIONAL ELECTION 2007

The Daily Star

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Dhaka, Friday December 08, 2006

Civil Society Initiative for Accountable Development

A Regional Dialogue on: "National Election: 2007: Civil Society Initiative for Accountable Development," was held in Narayanganj on 9 September, 2006 under the joint sponsorship of CPD, The Daily Star, Prothom Alo and Channel-1. Members of the Citizens' Committee, leaders of various political parties, people belonging to various professions and from all walks of life joined the dialogue. This supplement contains the summary of the discussions. The names and identities of the participants are published below. Due to constraint of space we are not able to publish the comments of all the participants.

-- Editor

Debapriya Bhattacharya

The Citizens' Dialogue started off with the gathering of many citizens on 20 March, 2006. At that time many people had the question in mind, what motivated us to organise this programme. Our answer was, in the last 15 years in a democratic set up Bangladesh has achieved progress in many sectors. There were great achievements on one side, but at the same time discrimination in society also increased. For this reason, the greater majority of the population is falling behind in terms of attaining overall development. This is going to affect our forward march on the road to progress. In our opinion, it is not difficult for Bangladesh to become a poverty-free middle-income country 15 years from today with one thousand dollars per capita. But this is not likely to happen because of a major hindrance.

The economy of Bangladesh has become a hostage to bad governance. We have to ensure proper, corruption free utilisation of our own resources. It is important to present a clear picture of the country that we shall have on the golden jubilees of independence of Bangladesh in the year 2021. A nation without a long-term goal, cannot be inspired sufficiently to move forward. That is why we have endeavoured to present a picture here. We have called this endeavour Vision-2021. We have identified some organisations and institutions that need to be made corruption-free first if we want good governance in Bangladesh. These are: parliament, judicial system, Election Commission, Anticorruption Commission, Revenue Board, administration etc. We feel that to attain these objectives we have to ensure transparency and accountability in policy making to strengthen parliamentary democracy. We noticed that during parliamentary elections, politicians are forced to listen to people. That is why we have selected this as the proper time to launch the programme so that honest, competent, patriotic and courageous people may be elected.



We want to recall in this last meeting what we have achieved in the past four months. I feel that we have been able to strengthen the belief in the minds of the people about the potential of Bangladesh. I believe that new hope and new desire in the minds of the people have found root. This is a big achievement for us. Secondly, we have been able to connect the civil society in various corners of the country with the national mainstream. The Daily Star, Prothom Alo and Channel-1 were the main facilitators in doing the work. Thirdly, with your participation the dedicated, traditional, honest and democratic principles have been further strengthened. People who love democracy and love their country have found new strength through this movement. This is another achievement of this movement.

I agree that the major drawback was that we could not go to village or union or district level with this movement. Many suggested we should go to the voters. We told them we neither had the organisational nor financial capacity to do that. But you can do that. Each of you belongs to an organisation. Each of you is a respectable citizen of the country. The problems of this country cannot be solved by an individual or an organisation or a party. It requires national consensus and concerted effort of us all.

Matiur Rahman



This is the 15th round of discussion. We have held 14 similar and successful discussions in the district towns. We may say this with conviction that the CPD initiated discussions where we have given support have attained historical importance. Never before such a broad based initiative taken with the involvement of the civil society. We had taken initiatives in 2001 and 2003 but this time it was organised on a bigger scale.

The country is heading towards an election. And we have a lot to accomplish. There are questions, apprehension and worry concerning the next election in our minds. Sometimes questions are raised whether the next election will be held at all, and if yes then

whether it will be free and fair. These questions only increase fear in people's mind. The ruling party members seem to be too desperate to win the election. The politicians in the opposition camp are also bent on winning the election. The statements and steps taken by the opposition have further increased people's apprehension. No one is confident that a free and fair would be possible under this present election commission. That is why there is the demand for the removal of the chief election commissioner before the election. There is doubt and suspicion in people's mind regarding the possible role of the caretaker government. Already 35 years have gone by since independence. We had the dream of creating a democratic, non-communal and exploitation free society. But we have to say this that the beginning of Bangladesh was not so bright. There is never ending conspiracy going on in the country. The military rule for one and half decades only increased the misery of the people. The governments in last fifteen years failed to establish democracy in the country. There were three elections since 1990. The successive governments politicised the administration: gave corruption a free hand; and failed to make parliament effectively functional. But things cannot go on like this. Elections are held and new governments are taking oath, but these government are failing to move the country forward. It is true that we have become self-sufficient in food and some progress have been made in other sectors like industry-health-human resource development etc. And yet, after all that, the country has reached a cross roads. Various policies, steps and activities of the past

List Of Participants

1. Afzal Hossain, Former MP and Secretary General, Narayanganj Diabetic Shamity (President, Regional Citizens' Dialogue, Narayanganj)
2. Matiur Rahman, Editor, Prothom Alo
3. Advocate Shakhwat Hossain Khan, General Secretary, District Lawyers Association, Narayanganj
4. Dr. Shahnewaz Chowdhury, President, Narayanganj District Medical Association
5. Ruman Reza, President, Narayanganj Press Club.
6. Alauddin Chowdhury, Professor (Retd), Govt. Tolaram College
7. Advocate Merina Begum, Member, Bangladesh Jatiotabadi Women Lawyers Association
8. Bulbul Chowdhury, Former Professor, Govt. Tolaram College
9. Farida Akhter, social worker, Bangladesh Mohila Shangstha
10. Al Amin, Nagar Porikalponabid, Narayanganj
11. Prof. Rashida Akter, General Secretary, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Narayanganj
12. Sadia Afroz Mukti, Lawyer
13. Ranu Khondokar, Teacher, ABC International School
14. Ononna Goswami, Student, Dhaka University
15. Mahmudul Hassan Mashud, Student, East West University
16. Afrida Jahar Juthi, Student, Jagannath University
17. Khodeza Khanam Nasrin, Commissioner, Naryanganj Pourashobha
18. Jahanara Akter, executive director, Jibon Shondhani Shomaj Kolyan Shangstha
19. M K Mannan, Cultural Organiser
20. Shekh Haider Ali, Director, BKMEA
21. Halim Azad, Senior Reporter, The Daily Jugantor
22. Komol Kanti Shaha, Senior Teacher, Narayanganj High School
23. MD. Nobi Hossain, PP, Narayanganj
24. Khondokar Anwar Hossain, Assistant Professor, Haji Ibrahim Alamchan School and College, Narayanganj
25. A K Azad, Entrepreneur
26. Chondon Shil, political activist
27. Mofizul Haq, Student

government have disappointed us.

We want the politicians to earn the confidence of the people. They should remain beside the people in real sense of the term. That is why our call is let us develop an accountable system; reduce corruption and stop politicisation. Let us tell the politicians, do not give shelter to terrorists or give them nomination. We shall disseminate this message in every way and we shall print it in newspapers. We shall make the citizens aware of the past, present and future of the terrorists and corrupt candidates.

We all have to work together to move the country forward. To attain that objective we shall continue to organise this dialogue and exchange of opinion. We shall remain steadfast despite criticism, negative publicity and intimidation. We shall endeavour to communicate the thoughts of the wise to the masses. We sincerely want to see this country as a democratic, secular and balanced state. Today, CPD, The Daily Star, Prothom Alo and Channel-i are trying to bring changes in the mindset of the people. People today are more conscious than before. Our main problem is competent and capable leadership. We have to create such leadership. For this we may have to wait for some more time. We have to continue with the work of creating public opinion. But we must bring changes. Questions may be raised as to whether as a newspaper or a research organisation or a TV channel we are treading on the right grounds, but we feel we are on the right track.

Adv. Shakhwat Hossain Khan

We have attained independence 35 years ago. But we are not where we were supposed to be. A democratic process has begun in the country since 1990. But for the prevailing political system, we see that democracy is under threat. We also see division in the civil society that gave leadership in the past in such programmes. The Supreme Court lawyers are not being able to perform their duties maintaining neutrality. Because of this division, we are not able to move forward to attain our goal. This citizens' dialogue should have been started long ago. Because of division, the acceptability of the civil society has decreased to some extent. I believe through this initiative of CPD, the acceptability would increase substantially. This initiative has to be taken to the grass roots level.

Dr. Shahnewaz Chowdhury

When a party wins election, the defeated party always rejects it. We have to develop a system where no one will raise any question about poll results. For this we need transparency. No foreign power will come to solve the problems of Bangladesh. We do not want them to do so.

Ruman Reza

In the last three elections some greedy people had come to power and they wanted to eat up everything possible in five years. Their greed has caused much suffering for the people. But we do not become vocal about these looters. No one wants to talk about them. In last ten years, jhoot worth Tk. 100 crore has gone to the anti-social elements. So, you can imagine the amount of money that has gone to their pocket in the entire country. We have to ask for the account of the money looted in last fifteen years. We want a looter-free country in 2021.

Dr. H.R. Kha

I am allergic to the term 'Politics'. I want to explain politics with the help of mathematics. Because there is an element of cruelty in the word politics. Politicians keep the people on their lap during election but throw them away after the work has been done.

Adv. Merina Begum

All women related developments have been done in the towns and cities. That is why women lag so far behind today. Women have to be given proper place for the overall development of Bangladesh. If women can cast their vote without interference, then only democracy will find its true meaning. Women must take part in politics. If women can be elected through direct vote then they would be able to contribute to the development of the country.

Farida Akhter

It is not the symbol of a candidate but his personality and judgement should be taken into consideration for vote. To develop him as a competent member of parliament, he should be given orientation and training. The local government structure including union parishad has to be strengthened. Women should not be included just to fill the quota but they should be involved in the whole process of governance. They should be encouraged to go for direct election. The civil society has to play a major role in selecting the candidates for the next election.

AI Amin

Those who are not qualified to run the affairs of the country, do come to power through the use of muscle or money. To prevent this trend there should be some guiding principles. The election commission has to be made stronger. At the moment they are not strong enough. Or they are not able to function freely. Election commission always plays into the hands of the political parties. Government servants should not be allowed to take part in the election immediately after their retirement. There should be the option of 'No' vote in the ballot paper. If the local government is made stronger, then there would not be so much competition to take part in the central election. Except state security, in all other issues people must have full access to information. Media will have to be active in projecting the background of those who take part in elections.

Prof. Rashida Akhter

All political parties will have to place the clearly issue of women development in their election manifesto. They will have to reinstate women development law of 1997. The number of reserve seats for women in parliament will be increased and they should be elected directly. The elected women will have to be given proper work and work environment. In nominating candidates, those who are anti-liberation or owners of black money or loan defaulters or are godfathers and terrorists will have to be rejected. Steps have to be taken against the fatwa givers. Every political party will have to reserve 15% of the seats for women.

28. Fazlul Haq, President, BKMEA
29. Major General (Retd) Moinul Hossain, Birprotik, Former Advisor to the Caretaker Government and member, Nagorik Committee 2006
30. Ahmed Halim Mazhar, Principal, Haji Ibrahim Alamchan School and College, Narayanganj
31. MD. Zohir Uddin Master, Secretary General, Bashashish and Coordinator, Teachers and Employers Association, Central Committee
32. Dr. Nazrul Islam, President, Progoti Shahityo Parishad
33. Shamshul Islam Bhuiyan, Lawyer
34. Afzal Hossain, district correspondent, Daily Bhorer Kagoj
35. MD. Abu Al Yusuf Khan Tipu, General Secretary, Jatiotabadi Sromik Dal, Narayanganj
36. Saidur Rahman Molla, Chairman, Sonar Gaon Pourashabha
37. Advocate Awlad Hossain, General Secretary, Narayanganj district NAP
38. Rokon Uddin Ahmed, General Secretary, Bangladesh Krishokh League, Narayanganj district committee
39. Shordar MD. Habibullah, Vice President, Somomona organisation, Narayanganj
40. Jamal Uddin Kalu, Food and Nutrition Secretary, district BNP, Narayanganj
41. Mahmuda Mala, President, Jubo Mohila League, Narayanganj district
42. Golam Mustafa, General Secretary, Jatio Sromik Federation, Narayanganj
43. Advocate Ahsanul Karim Chowdhury, Trade Union Organiser
44. Shukkur Mahmud, President, Jatio Sromik League, Narayanganj
45. Dulal Shaha, Secretary, CPB, Narayanganj
46. Tofazzol Hossain, Chief Reporter, Daily Shocheton
47. A B M Shohrab Hossain, President, Paikpara Union Awami League
48. MD. Abdul Hai, former Vice President, Narayanganj district Awami League
49. Amir Hossain, district correspondent, Daily Shangbad
50. Advocate MD. Kholilur Rahman, President, Human Rights Lawyers Association, Narayanganj
51. Rina Ahmed, Vice President, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Narayanganj district committee
52. Rokiur Rabbi, Former President, Naryanganj Shangskritik Jote
53. Anisuzzaman, Former Professor, Bangla Department, Dhaka University and member, Nagorik Committee 2006
54. Golam Morshed Faruki, Former MP
55. Advocate Nurul Kabir Ahmed, President, Narayanganj Mohanagar NAP
56. A T M Kamal, Former Convenor, Bikolpo Dhara Bangladesh
57. Advocate Mahbubur Rahman Ismail, Bangladesh Textile Garments Labours Association
58. Shafiuddin Ahmed, central polit bureau member, Bangladesh Workers Party
59. Delwar Hossain Chunnu, Convenor, Gonoforum, Narayanganj
60. Advocate Khokon Shaha, General Secretary, Sadar Awami League, Narayanganj
61. Jannatul Ferdous, Office secretary, district BNP, Narayanganj
62. Mohor Ali Chowdhury, General Secretary, Jashod (Inu), Narayanganj district
63. Advocate Montu Ghosh, President, CPB, Naryanganj
64. Anwar Hossain, President, Sadar Awami League, Naryanganj
65. MD. Solaiman Chowdhury, member, Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatro Kendro
66. MD. Monowarul Haque, Managing Director, VESDC
67. MD. Fazlul Haque Bhuiyan, Lawyer
68. MD. Ishaq Talukdar Mehedi, Lawyer
69. Amzad Hossain, Cultural Organiser
70. Moloy Dash Chandan, General Secretary, Shomona
71. Fanindra Sharkar, General Secretary, World Peace and Human Rights movement, Bangladesh
72. Mustafa Saiful Islam, Teacher
73. S M Shafiul Islam, Assistant Professor, Narayanganj Shorkari Mohila College
74. MD. Riazur Rahman Talukdar, Lawyer
75. Shuvash Shaha, Entrepreneur
76. Ajoy Kishor Modok, Income Tax Advisor
77. Shamsul Anam Mintu
78. Afsar uddin Ahmed, Janipol, Narayanganj
79. Monir Chowdhury, Senior Officer, Janata Bank
80. Rekha Chowdhury, Vice President, Mohila Parishad, Narayanganj
81. Anis Ahmed, Vice President, Aain Sringkhala Unnayan O Madok Birodhi Committee, Narayanganj
82. MD. Mashud Ur Rouf, Lawyer
83. MD. Mobarak Hossain Rana, Former President, Bangladesh Chhatro Union, Rajshahi University
84. Advocate A B Siddique, General Secretary, Sadar NAP
85. Advocate Taimur Alam Khandaker, Chairman, BRTC
86. Dr. Selina Hayat Ivy, Chairman, Narayanganj Pourashobha.

Debapriya Bhattacharya

You all know that at present women get elected through indirect vote. The number of seats have been increased lately. Will women be elected through direct vote in the next parliament? In the election manifesto of all the parties wanted this through indirect vote. Our proposal this time is, women should be elected through direct vote. If you cannot do it now then in the next parliament the major political parties may do necessary amendment so that in the future women can be elected directly. This has to come as an election pledge of all the political parties.



Fazlul Haque

If we cannot achieve the objectives 1 and 2 of the Vision 2021, will it be possible to achieve the rest? I propose that the Vision 2021 be divided into a number of parts. Otherwise it may turn out to be fairytale. I want to know whether the initiators of the Nagorik Committee have any doubt about the coming election. Because, in the book supplied by the Nagorik Committee there is an article by Muhammad Yunus in which he has talked about giving competent candidates. But today Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya said they have no intention of giving any candidate. I have a feeling that there is some doubt in them in this regard. I think the civil society has to be bold and come forward. I could not cast my vote in the election of Narayanganj Pourashava. My vote was falsely cast. No one can hope for a fair election under this election commission.

Major General (Retd) Mainul Hossain Chowdhury

We cannot hear the voice of the people as they get drowned under the meaningless talks of the politicians. We had thought that our duty was only to liberate the country. But we had forgotten that it was only the beginning. In the last thirty years politics has taken the shape of a triangle. Democracy, terrorism and corruption this is politics. Democracy is dependent on terrorism and corruption.

In my view a candidate should be selected on the basis of his character, not popularity. Character reflects him as a person. Popularity is what others think about him. He may influence that thought in many ways. It is easy to measure character when in power. As a freedom fighter I find meddling of foreigners in our affairs quite painful. The politics of the day is responsible for this. Political parties will nominate candidates for the 2007 election. I do not think we shall be able to influence them to nominate competent candidates. Unless we develop ourselves, we shall not get competent candidates. I think in all the general elections that were held since 1970, people's opinions have been rightly reflected. It is damaging for both the country and democracy not to accept the results of election.

Mohammad Abu Yusuf Khan Tipu

It is no good blaming the politicians. The present day politics is not being controlled by politicians. The black money owners and corrupt retired officials. That is why there is rot in politics today. I agree with CPD's proposal to monitor the spending of money by the candidates. The point about ensuring voting right and security of the minority voters is not correct. This is a negative publicity. Members of parliament will have to be involved with development works besides creating and implementing laws. Otherwise corruption will further increase. Loan defaulters must not be allowed any space. They must not be allowed to take part in election by paying 5-10 % of the loan. All nomination seekers must have 12 year-record of doing politics at the local level. No government official should be allowed to join politics within ten years after retirement.

Rokon Uddin Ahmed

The common voters would be benefited if these messages reach them. Corruption by ministers and MPs has to be stopped. Nomination is being bought and sold inside political parties. My proposal is, nomination has to be given on the basis of recommendation of local level political leaders.

Shukkur Mahmud

The judiciary, election commission and administration require massive change. Election is not possible without certain reforms. Electoral system is no Koran or Bible that there cannot be any reform. The initiative of the civil society to this effect is praiseworthy. The scope of this dialogue has to be widened and common people have to be involved in it.

Rina Ahmed

We have to stand up to resist the game being played regarding the number of seats for women. The plan to corner women is reflected in the national development plan 2005. In the development policy of 1997 the issue of women development has been overlooked. Women had protested against this policy. Half of the voters in this country is women therefore this segment need to be developed.

Anisuzzaman



As worried citizens of the country we have brought before you this Vision 2021 keeping the election of 2007 in view. Many questions have been raised about us by now. Who we are; why are we doing this; what is our motive; what right do we have to do such things and so on. Our answer is simple: As the citizen of this country we have the right to think about the country. Those who do politics expect us to vote for them. We want to tell them what we expect from them. We want that the coming election should be free and fair and acceptable to all. Our experience shows that election for a second time had to be held within four months of holding one. We have some idea about which election becomes acceptable and which not. For a free and fair election the very first thing needed is a proper voter list. There has been lots of controversy concerning the voter list. It went upto the highest court. Questions are also being raised about the latest voter list. Even the election commission said some voters may be left out of this list. Therefore we have reasons to be worried about the voter list. Then whether those who have names in the list will actually be able to go to the centre or cast their votes in favour of their candidate are other questions we have in our mind. Will the election result reflect their decisions? In this regard we have talked about strengthening the election commission. The election commission has to be comprised of people who are known to be neutral. We have also talked about some electoral reforms.

During election candidates or political parties give some promises. But they cannot keep those promises. For example, separating the judiciary from the administration or giving autonomy to the media.

These are included in the manifesto of all the parties but in reality these are not done. Some leaders say that they never promised to do it during the tenure of this government. They tell the people to bring them to power once again so that they can fulfill the promises. Here comes the question of accountability. We want them to tell us how much of the promises given last time have been fulfilled by them.

If voters get information about the candidates then it would become possible for them to assess their honesty and competence. Political parties should not nominate people with black money or having connection with terrorism. Our purpose is not to criticise the politicians. We have seen many politicians who have become paupers doing politics. Then again we have seen paupers become filthy rich by doing politics. It is true that honest and competent candidates do not get elected all the time. This is our misfortune. Common people cannot identify them. Through the coming election we want to see a functional parliament, a parliament that will speak for the people and progress towards the path of development.

Everything that is happening today from educational institutes to social life is the result of erosion of values. We have taken the initiative to remove that. We want the discrimination in the education system against men and women to end. Research is essential component of higher education.

Adv. Nurul Kabir Ahmed

It is mentioned in them leaflet about independence of the judiciary, dependence of bureaucracy, interference of foreign powers and so on. There is mention of this in the constitution of 1972. We cannot get out of this cycle unless we can be self-reliant and stop asking for money. I am also for two-chamber parliament.

ATM kamal

When I see that the words and deeds of a person do not correspond, I feel very frustrated. There is a nomination board in every political party to select

candidates. Let Nagorik Committee form a shadow selection board in every district and search honest and competent candidates.

Shafiuddin Ahmed

Among the eight objectives outlined by Nagorik Committee there is mention of Bangladesh politics and development. But we cannot leave out the hard working workers from this. We cannot think of a ideal society without their participation. The garments workers have signed a tripartite agreement but it is not being implemented. My request to Nagorik Committee, please speak about this issue. There is no proper democracy in the two major political parties. Help begin the process there. That will ensure selection of competent candidates.

Delowar Hossain Channu

The country is passing through a crisis period. People want a meaningful change. This country has to be freed from sick politics. We have to reject owners of black money and godfathers.

Adv. Montu Ghosh

For minor things ambassadors of America or some other country try to dictate us. Opposition political parties ask for help to them. If we do not stand up against capitalism, we shall not be able to keep our independence and ensure development. It is not good to blame the politicians only. There are politicians who have contributed in the development of the country. CPD and the civil society members will have to turn their faces to them. The high and mighty had to bow down for Kamsat, Shanir akhra and garments workers. The literate people do not consider those people as political force. Unless they are organized all attempts to do politics will go in vain.

Anwar Hossain

Human rights is being violated everywhere in Bangladesh. It has to be seen whether after the brutal treatment of the leaders and workers of the opposition there is any environment for dialogue. The degeneration of politics does not happen in a day. Since the assassination of Bangabandhu in 1975, real politicians are being pushed to the corner. Politics has gone to the bureaucrats, army and vested quarters. Before liberation student leaders were all meritorious students. Now it has gone to mastans and cadres. People do not want to see terrorists and godfathers given nomination this time.

Adv. Taimur Alam Khandaker

This is a very timely programme. Everyone is hoping that the next election will be a free and fair one and good candidates will get elected. But our past experience says that Bangladesh is considered a big cake by many. We prepare this cake for 300 people and they take a slice each. Voters try to find out who has more money. Voters themselves do not look for honest candidates. One who is not involved in politics throughout the year suddenly want to contest in elections. We the political workers run after such people. Why don't the people take the decision that they would not vote for any corrupt person? If parties can perceive this mindset of the people then they will not nominate corrupt candidates. Even in the election of lawyers association we see money playing a role. Therefore, why should poor people living in slums cast their votes for free? It is the concept that needs to be changed and not only the system.

Dr. Selina Hayat Ivy

If there is a strong civil society then only a government can be strong. Many people are criticizing hartal. I have myself worked in many hartals. For some issues hartal is acceptable. If the civil society becomes vocal and politicians have good relationship among them there would be no necessity of hartal.

If we want honest and competent candidates then everyone in society have to be honest. The liberation war movements were done by the politicians. They were patriots. We have to bring back that spirit. Democracy was killed when Bangabandhu was killed in 1975. Why do civil society members keep mum when Bangladesh flag is seen in the cars of the Rajakars? We have become self-centered. The entire nation has become corrupt. I have carried out my responsibilities with honesty. But many people in Naraynaganj do not like me. My own staff say we do not want this chairman. My party people say tell me that I do not talk about my party after getting elected. Once a person gets elected he/she becomes the representative of all. One has to rise above the party and work for the nation. Unless this mentality finds hold, there will not be any development. The time has come when there will be explosions in every corner of the country like Kamsat and phulbari. Let us drive the looters out of this country.

Afzal Hossain

People want to see a society and parliament free of black money and terrorism. Politics has to be made free of these things. We hope political leaders will talk about the recommendations in their party meetings and they will be respectful to them. We know that unwanted people corrupt politics. When politics become corrupt the whole country faces uncertainty. But the real politicians love the country and play significant role in the development of the country. We have to stand beside such politicians and unite them to strengthen the healthy political process. The initiative taken by CPD to speed up the process is praiseworthy. We are with this initiative.

Recommendations From The Dialogue (in Brief)

- * Citizens' dialogue should have been started long before. Though late, it has to be taken to union and village level. All recommendations should be given to the party in power and those in opposition. Citizens' dialogue should continue even after elections.
- * Election Commission has to be made neutral, corruption and party influence free so that they can hold a free and fair election.
- * Politicisation has to be resisted.
- * Autonomy of radio and television has to be ensured.
- * The judiciary has to be separated from the administration. Lawyers have to be neutral.
- * Candidates must be graduates. Politicians need reform. Environment has to be created for honest and competent people to get effectively involved in politics. Voters must be supplied with information on candidates' honesty and competence. No one should be given nomination who does not have track record of 10-year active role in politics. Monitor cell has to be created to control the expenditure of candidates before election. MPs should be made experts through training and workshop.
- * One candidate should not contest from more than one constituency, because that would stop misuse of money for holding another election. Voters should have the right to cast two votes one for the favourite party and one for the favourite person. There should be two person on preference list. In case one dies than the other can fill up the vacant position. That would save the cost of another election.
- * Holidays on the death anniversary of political leaders should be cancelled and work time should be increased by two hours. Because these political leaders had given their life for the country therefore to stop working on their death anniversary would be like working against their dream for development of the country.
- * Foreign help should not be taken for solving internal problems of the country. It is the people of the country who would solve the problems. All problems of the country should be solved with 50% support of the government and 50% support of the people.
- * The term politics should be changed to Manobniti or Gononiti.
- * Participation of women in politics should be ensured. Women seats should be developed through empowerment. Women empowerment and equal rights have to be included in election manifesto.
- * There should be decentralisation of the government. Local government has to be given more power. Central government shows various weaknesses while running the affairs of the state.
- * Facilities should be provided for meritorious and educated students to join politics. Students should be told who is a competent candidate and why. Students who are involved in terrorism should be thrown out of schools and colleges.
- * Drawing policemen in politics has to be stopped.
- * Religion must not be used in politics.
- * Slaughtering of people in medieval manner has to stop.
- * Fundamental politics has to stop.
- * International involvement in big bombing cases.
- * Opposition political party must never be allowed to give call for hartal.
- * MPs should not be directly involved in local development works. Local administration should do these works.
- * Two chamber parliament to be introduced.
- * Political activists should practice democracy.
- * Election should be held on six days in six divisions.
- * Tenure of parliament should be made four years. Ten seats should be kept aside for the civil society. Strong measures should be taken about teachers.

