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Note of the Publisher

The Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is a complete Islami movement and an Islamic political party that believes in democracy. This party is implementing different programs like correction and construction of the society on the one hand and on the other God fearing, truthful and efficient leadership in a democratic way based on Islamic values. The Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami wants to establish Bangladesh a welfare, self-reliant and developed country. For this reason, the Jamaat-e-Islami is relentlessly working to get support of its population. The Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami believes that the Islam is not a model that could be imposed upon the people. Rather the victory of Islam is possible only through the spontaneous participation of the people.

A considerable range of deliberations on some issues is going on strongly, such as, practice of democracy within the political party, transparency, accountability and honest leadership. Specially recent change of political environment , the issues have got more importance in every quarter.

Mr. Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujaheed, the Secretary General of the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and former Minister has written three articles in the Daily Sangram in three different headings describing the position of the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh on the above-mentioned issues. In the articles clear idea about the identity of an ideal democratic party, honest leadership, transparency and accountability has been given.

In the present context, I feel necessary to acknowledge the leaders and workers of the political arena about the issues. So, from point of view, the three articles have edited and published in form of a book.

I believe, readers would be benefited and gathered information going through the book. (May Allah give us strength to walk on the right path.)

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

A TRANSPARENT ACCOUNTABLE AND IDEAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami: An Unique Example of Transparency and Accountability

A considerable range of deliberations and thorough discussions is going on concerning political parties and political leadership in the recent days. Many discussions are being made about issues relating to the transparency, accountability and honesty of the politicians. No debate emerges from the fact that the politicians rule the country. Therefore it is upon their honesty on which the development and advancement of the country depends. The people of Bangladesh strongly believe that it is the election, which should determine which political party or politician should rule the country.

If good and honest politicians win through the people's vote, the country would then run properly. Unfortunately, if a good politician, a party, or a coalition does not win the election, then the country will not be able to run properly, despite all moral speeches are made in front of the microphones. It is reasonable and vivid that for good administration and welfare of the state, there is no alternative of the honest and efficient politicians. Therefore, an honest, efficient and devoted party is required to rule the country. This is the great desire of the peace-loving and beneficent people of the country.

In this very hour of public expectation, I think it is my responsibility to introduce the luminous and exceptional characteristic of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami for information of

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all. In this book, I am highlighting some practical characteristics of Jamaat-e-Islami relating to the sources of income, head of expenditures, transparency and accountability. In our country, there is no shortage of truth-loving people, but there is a huge scarcity of people searching for the truth. It is a fact that if we do not personally like an individual, we even consider his/her good sides with a bad perspective. On the contrary, the individual that we personally like, even his/her bad deeds are considered in a positive manner. Getting free from this unwanted running current (i.e. existing ideas of the people); I hope that the core essence of this book will be considered.

When an individual joins in Jamaat-e-Islami, we try to give him a clear concept of our approach that he/she has to sacrifice for the party and for the country. It will not be of any use to think about increment of wealth or enrich himself from the party. Politics or movement is not for making fortunes for any individual; rather it is for the benefit of the country, nation and the general population. In other words, it requires the individual to sacrifice, not to enjoy any wealth or fortune. Each member, worker and associate members, whether men or women of Jamaat, have been motivated to do sacrifice. This includes all types of sacrifice i.e. sacrifice of time, relaxation, money, wealth, etc. As a result, a cordial and brotherly relationship is developed among the party brothers and sisters.

The requirement of funds is undoubtedly necessary to run a party, to move it forward and above all to serve the country and the nation. If there is no regular source of income then where all these money would come from? If the party does not have a clear answer, definitely it would be required to think of some invisible source of income. Generally, these invisible sources are never legitimate and in that case, transparency is lost. Therefore, Jamaat-e-Islami makes this issue very clear from the beginning. The subscription from the party men is the main source of income in Jamaat-e-Islami. There are regular sources of income for regular expenditures; while for special expenditures, there are sources as well.

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The sources of regular income

A. Income from the Members (Rukons)

After oath taking, the members (male/female) of the party subscribe a minimum of 5% of their monthly income to Jammat fund regularly. All the members (male/female) working in village, Union Parishad or Upazila level organizations subscribe the above-mentioned percentage of their income to their organizations.

B. The workers

The workers also subscribe a minimum of 3% of their monthly income for the party in the same manner.

C. Active Associate Member

The active associate members also subscribe a percentage of their income to Jamaat fund according to their abilities. It is necessary to mention that their financial sacrifice is spontaneous. Due to regular motivation, they are working for the party only to serve the country, the nation and the people of our country. The beliefs, which have been motivated to believe strongly is that the worldly life is temporary. The life of Aakhirat (the life after death) is permanent. Therefore, success of life does not depend on the achievement or loosing of anything in this world. The reward of Aakhirat (life after death) is the criterion of success in life. They believe that happiness is lying hidden in the sacrifice and peace in the service towards country and nation. The Almighty is pleased with it and His satisfaction is the only successful achievement of constant life endeavor. Being inspired with this concept, the party men of Jamaat sacrifice their resources for the party with utmost satisfaction.

At present, the number of such workers is about a quarter million. They regularly subscribe money to their local organizations for which they are given the receipt. They maintained cashbook and ledger book for income and expenditure, where these are recorded regularly. The source of

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income of the central organization is central leader's subscription and its enlisted manpower. Every leader including Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami subscribes 5% of their regular monthly income to central fund. They are given the receipt of their subscription too. The central fund is also enriched with the subscription from the district level organization. The district organization receives the receipt of their subscribed fund.

For one time expenditure, there is a system of collection of funds. The above-mentioned manpower is the main source of income. However, sometimes many well-wishers spontaneously donate money to the party fund, which is recorded by the central organization and the receipt is also provided. It may be noted that Jamaat has centrally collected money from its own manpower before the 2006 for the then scheduled national election. Some coupons were also printed for this purpose in the name of central organization. Every member (male/female) was requested to subscribe a minimum amount of money to the party election fund, which is equivalent to his one-month's income. They were requested to pay this in several installments if they could not able to subscribe in one go. My head is humbly bent down to the Almighty Allah and I am indebted to our party men for their tremendous response to the request. Thanks to all of them for their cordial sacrifice. Many of them have donated more than one-month's income. This is really an unprecedented example of sacrifice of our party men. I am really feeling honored to be a responsible person of such a party, which is administered with such brothers and sisters. We do not desire to be puffed up with the worldly wealth. However, it is really a pride to be party member of such an organization. In this money collection process, there is transparency. Local organization records the amount they collected and when they deposit the money to the central fund, they were given the receipt. Therefore, every amount, which is deposited by the local organization to the central fund, is recorded with all particulars.

The procedure in expenditure is very clear and transparent and strict rules and regulations are followed here. The leaders,

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even the Ameer or the President, cannot keep the money in their hands. All money should be deposited to the Cashier, while the Accounts Officer preserves the record. In the process of expenditure, it is required that leader approves any amount, the Accounts Officer initiates the process of approval and the Cashier finally pays. So the system is that approving authority does not retain money, while those who handle the money cannot spend without the approval of the authority i.e. there is a check and balance in the system of expenditure. There is no scope to keep money inside anyone's womb. Nevertheless, even after such a strict procedure, Jamaat considers the existing procedure not enough. So, they have made the following four procedures compulsory:

1. Regular submission and analysis of Report

From central to local organization, in every tier, there is a Finance (Baitulmal) Committee. This Committee analyzes the income and expenditure of the relevant organization every month. Detailed accounts of the central organization are produced before the Central Majlish-e-Shura once a year. Members are allowed to comment freely about the accounts. In the same way, the district organizations also have to produce detailed accounts to the District Majlish-e-Shura for approval. The sources of income and heads of expenditure cannot be kept in darkness to the concerned manpower.

2. Audit System

To authenticate the sources of income and heads of expenditure regular audit is held. For this reason, there is an audit team in the central organization. The Majlish-e-Shura forms an audit team, which independently audits all the accounts throughout the country. There is no scope to interfere their activities. The Central Auditor submits the audit report directly to the central Majlish-e-Shura. A similar system is also prevailing in district and the thana level of organization to audit the relevant accounts.

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3. Budget Preparation

The Budget of every organization is prepared before the beginning of the year. The Central Majlish-e-Shura approves the central budget. In the same way, the district and thana Majlish-e-Shura also approve their budget. The expenditure is made based on this budget during the year. If there is any additional expenditure, then it should be approved by the concerned Majlish-e-Shura, which has the authority to approve or reject the same.

4. Preventive measure to eradicate short-comings

If any short-coming is found in the audit report or in the total procedure or if any misappropriation or misuse is proved, then there is a system to take organizational steps against the alleged manpower. There is no scope of personal favor or to see the identity of the alleged person. Every alleged person has to face the constitutional procedure of the party. If the allegation is proved then (a) the alleged person has to refund the misappropriated amount and (b) his membership might be cancelled and finally he may be expelled from the party. All steps are being taken according to the level of the offence.

Like the regular and special sources of income of the party there is also some regular and special heads of expenditure. The regular expenditure is:

a. Office rent
b. Salary of the staffs
c. Electricity and gas bill
d. Telephone bill
e. Conveyance bill
f. Oil and fuel bill
g. Meetings and programs
h. Entertainment bill
j. Publicity (press notes, etc.)
k. Act of Dawah' (general meetings and gatherings)
l. Office equipments, etc.

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The heads of special expenditure are

a. Half-yearly and yearly conferences
b. Poster or leaflet
c. Processions
d. Big public meeting
e. Purchase of furniture
f. Local or national election, etc.

For any expenditure, the following conditions are compulsory...

1. The expenditure must be within the approved budget.
2. Voucher must be submitted after expenditure. Otherwise, it will not be approved.
3. The resources of the party cannot be used for personal cause. If anyone uses the office telephone for personal necessities, then he has to pay for it. Similarly, every one is to pay the oil-fuel bill, toll, ferry bill if he uses the office vehicles for personal purpose. For these types of expenditures, there is a regulation, which is followed very strictly.

For any expenditure, generally economy is observed. The worker, who spends money, never enjoys any financial benefit from the party i.e. no bill is submitted after keeping any margin or commission like the contractors. By the grace of Almighty, the members and workers are free from this sort of mentality of enjoying financial benefit in lieu of the organizational activities.

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THE DESIRED TRUTHFUL PARTY OF THE PEOPLE

Since 2005, the issue of honest leadership and the participation by the honest candidate in the election has been coming up too much. Particularly, deliberations and thorough discussions regarding the honesty are coming up to the politically conscious societies largely. There were flood-tide discussions in workshops, round tables and even in the talk-show programs in various electronic media. Although, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has been talking about the significance and the importance of the establishment of honest leadership in the country since many years, honestly nobody came up with it or emphasized it before. However, now it is really a positive sign to put importance on the issue of honesty in politics.

Nevertheless, the question is that, what we mean by an honest man, honest leadership or honest candidature. Generally, the person who earns money honestly and spends in an honest way is considered as an honest man. However, when the word 'honest' is tagged with the leadership, then the above simple meaning is not enough. The meaning has become wider and deeper. I am going to express my views on this aspect here and I hope that the readers will look at it more deeply.

The following are the interpretation of honesty

- ⇨ Earning and expenditure must be legal and legitimate. In other words, all illegal and prohibited ways must be avoided.
- ⇨ Exercising power in the right way i.e. in no position misuse of power be allowed. When this is implemented, then ordinary innocent people would get justice; the guilty

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people and criminals would never get unlimited license to make crime.

- ⇨ Upkeeping promise: One has to upkeep promises in his personal life, family, social, national and professional life in different situations at any cost. Upkeeping oath or promises are great examples of honesty. Violating oath, one can never claim himself as an honest person. This is why Islam has emphasized on keeping promises with utmost seriousness. The parents are also asked to keep their promises with their children. If there is any unlawful promise, and if there is any chance of occurring huge loss to keep that promise, yet that cannot be kept; above that he has to pay a money penalty for violating such promise. It indicates clearly that violation of promises in national life is a big type of corruption. Being a national leader if a person violates his promises, there may be terrible consequences. If the person is a leader of a party and violates the constitution of his party, then there may be great disorder in the party. Again, if he is a national leader and violates constitution of the country, then the whole nation would fall in a disaster. I should mention here very clearly that the word leadership is not only applied in politics; but also included in professional responsibility and leadership.

- ⇨ Nepotism is another kind of corruption. Providing any sort of unfair privilege to party men and relatives is also considered as corruption. To get free from all these types of nepotism is a basic demand of honesty.

- ⇨ Another criterion of honesty is to get free from the bad habit of unfair recommendations. It is the demand of the honesty that in the case of employing someone, posting, selection of place or giving promotion must be free from unfair recommendations. Otherwise, a person might be deprived from his legal rights or other person may get illegal facility. Due to unfair recommendations, a successful candidate might be out of list of successful

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candidates, while an unsuccessful candidate might be included in the list of successful candidates, which is big type of oppression and corruption.

- ⇨ Morality and well-coordinated activity is another criterion of honesty. Every man has ethical value or conscience within himself, which are instinctive and nourished with religious values. If a person takes alcohols and keeps secret to his wife, parents, children, his companions, or to the members of the society, then it is understood that he is hunted by his conscience. Even after this, he continues drinking then it must be said that he is making treachery with his own ethical values and conscience, which is another type of corruption. It is never possible to produce honest leadership by such type of corrupted person. Because, if he does not stop being a traitor, then he would not dare to earn illegal wealth.

- ⇨ Similarity between words and deeds is a great criterion of honesty. There may be many palatable and convincing words in speeches of party's program, electoral manifesto, and wall writing or in the goals and objectives of projects. If these commitments remain unimplemented, then those sweet words would turn into deception on the one hand and would fall into dishonesty on the other. For this reason, it is declared in the Islamic principle that dissimilarity between words and deeds is a big crime, for which Almighty Allah extremely infuriates to those people who are practicing these offences.

After analyzing the whole thing objectively, it is evident that honesty or honest leadership is a wide meaningful concept. One has to accept the above standard to succeed in the criterion of honest leadership. Naturally, if any one desires to build up his children as honest citizens, then he has to start the motivation program from the very beginning. Similarly, if any party wants to prepare its party workers as honest workers and simultaneously wants to offer the nation honest leadership, then there must be some balanced motivation programs for the

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workers to succeed in this difficult task. Every worker of the party should be evaluated based on the above criteria. Every one has to be built-up as a sacrificing worker. If workers are attracted to enroll in the party by promising them to offer jobs, business opportunity, different paths of money income or favoring even if they are involved in any crime; then this type of workers would never be able to serve the country, the nation and its people. Rather they always try to make their fortunes from the party. Ultimately, an unstable environment would prevail in the party for their greedy attitude.

The people, who want to offer honest political party or honest leadership, have to evaluate the existing political parties according to the abovementioned criteria. It will not be justified if evaluation is based on dogma and pre-conceived ideas or malignity. On the other hand, if any one desires to form a new political party or want to welcome any new one, then he has to follow the principles of honesty mentioned above; otherwise, all the arrangements and endeavors would be futile.

An Example

In this context, I want to introduce Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami. I like to request my respected readers to evaluate Jamaat-e-Islami based on the abovementioned criterion of honesty.

Jamaat firmly expects an administration to be established by the honest leadership on the one hand; and on the other, they have firm conviction to establish good governance when they would form a Government. Any citizen of Bangladeshi can join into Jamaat-e-Islami and we cordially welcome people of any age or any religion into our party. There is no narrowness or artificial barrier in the process. However, the persons who are responsible to represent the party must have to develop their standard according to their responsibility. In the light of reality, we can divide the manpower of Jamaat-e-Islami into the following four categories:

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1. **Associate Member/Supporter**

The people, those who ethically support the ideology and programs of Jamaat-e-Islami and join in the party, we consider them as Associate members or supporters of the party. Formally, they do not hold any responsibilities to represent the party. According to the teachings of Islam, we request them to accept good things and reject bad things as a continuous process. As a result, a strong conscience is created within themselves in favor of good things and against bad things. In other words, their efficiency is built up in identifying the good as good and bad as bad, which helps the party to be stronger, and on the other hand, helps to put a positive influence in the national life.

2. **Workers**

The persons who try their level best to implement the regular or irregular programs of the party, are called workers. Although not formally, this type of persons are recognized as the people of Jamaat through their activities. As a result, they are in any way representing Jamaat before the mass people. Therefore, Jamaat is nurturing its workers so that there is no misrepresentation of the party through their activities. They are regularly reminded to speak truth, to keep promise, not to harm anybody, to behave properly and to perform their regular prayers. For this purpose, the workers are habituated in attending regular meetings, reading of Islamic and other good books, sacrifice for the party and others, encouraging for doing good works and dissuading bad works, etc. As a result, the whole environment is built up in favor of good things and guard against bad things.

3. **Members (Rukons)**

Formally, in the society the members (Rukons) represent of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami. Therefore, Jamaat is thoroughly careful to build up its members as honest, virtuous, expert and efficient citizens. Jamaat enroll its

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members only when they are able to acquire some qualities, which are as under:

a) A member requires studying the Holy Quran, Hadith, books on Social Science, Movement and Organization, Country, Nation and to acquire knowledge on current situation of the world.

b) Practice Islamic Rules and Regulations in different stages of life.

c) Keeping free from all types of crimes and vices.

d) Keeping oath or promises with devotion. Keeping promises not only with the organization but also with all the family members, relatives, neighbors, colleagues, and with the people of the society.

e) Income must be legal i.e. a member of Jamaat, in no way can earn a single penny illegally. Therefore, he tries to maintain his family based on the principle of 'Cut your coat according to your cloth.' It is an indispensable duty of a member to lead a very simple life. In social and family functions including marriage ceremony, a member is reminded to take care about his capability of expenditure. Because, usual custom may unjustly encourage him to be involved with illegal income. When a member of Jamaat becomes debt burdened, he is always reminded to repay his debts in time.

f) To perform the duties sincerely is another feature of the members of Jamaat. Every person has his duties towards his family particularly to his children, life partner (husband-wife) and parents. In addition, he has duties and responsibilities towards his relatives, neighbors, and his party and supremely towards the country and the nation. It is an indispensable condition to be a member of Jamaat-e-Islami to perform all these duties and responsibilities properly. It means a member must try to build up his children

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as honest, efficient and virtuous, he should be careful about the rights of his mother, father and wife. Above all, he must posses the quality to give priority sacrificing his self-interest for the sake of the country and for the nation.

g) The soul of a party is discipline and loyalty. Every decision would be complied with and not only that every one would speak in favor of the decision. If there were any shortcoming or weakness in the decision, then it would be disposed of according to the specified procedure of the party. None would be indiscipline. To abide by the decision, one must realize the reason behind taking such decisions and then sincerely try to implement those. There will be brotherly relationship among the members, respect to the leaders and affection to the workers. Every one would give priority on the desire and demand of the party to his personal likings and disliking. Members (male/female) of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami have to follow all these organizational manners honestly.

h) Generally, a person or a party whether good or bad depends upon the behavior of the workers and the conduct of the party. From this point of view, Jamaat nurses the practical life of all of its members. The members try to preserve some good qualities; for example, they try to practice modesty instead of pride, politeness instead of angerness, they prefer patience instead of restlessness, balance instead of excitement, etc.

i) Jamaat members try to obey the holy order of the Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him), "You must choice the same thing for your brother what you choice for yourself." They control their selfishness and prioritize others welfare. They try to accompany with the sufferings and happiness others. Therefore, it is easier for Jamaat to bear many big responsibilities as it is done with united effort. As we feel pain in our

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whole body when we are attacked with pain in a particular organ, similarly the whole community of Jamaat also feels pain when a particular worker has any sufferings. Every member (brother and sister) of Jamaat seriously tries to establish these unique examples.

j) I have already mentioned in my previous writing that the main source of income of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is the financial sacrifice of its members. In time of necessity, members of Jamaat also donate their one/two/three month's salary in addition to their regular subscription of 5% of their monthly income.

k) The regular duty of the members of Jamaat-e-Islami is to preach good advises, encourage good activities, and cooperate and to highlight clearly, what is good. In other words, it is their responsibility to invite the human being towards humanity, the path of eternal salvation and welfare of Islam and towards peace and development. It is their mission to build up peaceful environment and pleasant society. On the contrary, it is their moral responsibility to identify the evil as evil, dissuade others from evil activities, and create public opinion and to build up continuous resistance against evil activities. For this reason, the members of the Jammat-e-Islami are always in favor of truth and justice and against injustice and oppression.

l) The members (brothers and sisters) of Jamaat-e-Islami are bound by an obligation through the process of reading, motivation and training the conception of 'the party is more important than a person and the country is more important than that of the party'. Patriotism, duties to the country and taking positive role in the development of the country are the characteristics of the members of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami. To obey the constitution and existing laws of the country, and to show respect to the National Flag and National Anthem are the obligatory

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duties of Jamaat members. These are their constitutional and moral responsibilities as citizens. The members (male/ female) are always motivated in the way that the national interest will get priority over their personal interest.

4. Leadership

The party members should posses the above-mentioned qualities and characteristics as the primary condition for leadership in Jamaat-e-Islami. It is mandatory as per Constitution of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami that the Jamaat leaders should possess some qualities like regular habit of reading, practicing Islamic rules and regulations, adorning the humanitarian value, performing duties towards family members, relatives, neighbors and society. They are to subscribe a minimum of 5% of the monthly income and sacrifice their life for the country. "O the faithful, why are you talking about those matters, which you do not apply in your personal life"- Jamaat leaders are reminded frequently this alerting verse of Al-Quran. They are to establish examples not only by their words but also through their activities.

- ⇨ Generally, Jamaat leaders never order the party workers. They usually inspire them by moral influence and affection. As a result, there is no boss-servant relationship between the leader and the workers; rather there is a brotherly relationship, which is full of respect and love.
- ⇨ Any person who is aspirant for any post and if it is proved through his behavior and deliberations, he is never selected for the post. Because, it is found that the person who is aspirant for any post, he is never careful about the responsibilities of the post. Rather, he would misuse the post to achieve his personal and family interest. For this reason, the person, who

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is aspirant for any post, is kept away from the post of leadership according to teachings of Islam.

- ⇨ The leaders have to put up their individual monthly report like the general members every month. Attention is drawn to the weaknesses through respect, love and affection. Any worker can draw attention of the leader of his weaknesses and generally, it is done. This practice is a regular one in the organizational practice of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami.

- ⇨ The person, who is involved with illegal income, owns illegal wealth, destroy other's resources, or violating basic Islamic principles cannot be a leader of Jamaat-e-Islami. A leader is removed from the post, if any allegation of misconduct and negligence even to his wife is proved. Many persons often say to me, "can't you be little more liberal, and then we may join with you, as your party is so nice and good." I asked them to clarify the definition of this word 'liberal'. In their reply, they expect compromise. They requested not to follow hard-line principles of ethics. According to their view, if we continue in this way, then we will never be able to come to power.

My question is where we will compromise. How we become liberal? Would it be done through sacrificing honesty or bypassing Islamic values, or renouncing the rules and regulations of Islam? We may come to power, but that will never change the situation of the country as we expect. It may be possible to come to power after making compromise, where success could be achieved plundering the national wealth. In this way, no contribution could be achieved for the country, nation and for the people. Therefore, we should wait until the expected mass rising of people and Ins-Allah; the people will rise one day.

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is a party of human beings, not of angels. So very naturally, there may have some faults,

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mistakes and weaknesses. We never claim that, we are a party beyond any wrong and shortcomings. When we are able to know any wrong, shortcomings or weaknesses, instantly we become alert and we make our party free from those shortcomings and weaknesses. It is often done by removing the person concerned from his leadership position. When it becomes necessary to dismiss any person at fault from the membership of the party, we do it without any hesitation or doubt, whatever painful the action is. Every month some workers are included in the list of members; some resigned due to degradation of their standard and some for greater causes. Some times membership of some body is dismissed. These are part of regular organizational activities of the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami. So there may be weaknesses or injustices-but the party never consciously indulges or nourishes it.

The people with conscience will genuinely consider the identity of honest leadership, which I have presented so far. At the same time, the identity of Jamaat-e-Islami, which is also presented here, is practical. It is not a fact that I am just presenting the honest leadership only due to it is discussed today widely. Rather, the identity of Jamaat-e-Islami is not a theoretical one; it is realistic. From the beginning of the party, Jamaat-e-Islami is working maintaining this standard. There is no doubt that the Jamaat-e-Islami has to come across a long way and the way it has to cross is not easy and smooth. It has to cross many barriers, face many difficulties in every step of its path. Jamaat-e-Islami is wounded seriously by repression and false propaganda. Yet Jamaat-e-Islami has retained its firm position due to its solid commitment to go ahead as an uncompromising and devoted party. This achievement is the outcome of sacrifice of the lives of brothers and sisters of Jamaat-e-Islami, who sweat of their brow little by little and above all of unending mercy of Almighty Allah. Therefore, Ins-Allah, the Jamaat-e-Islami will go ahead as a party intently devoted to the truth.

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A DEVOTED DEMOCRATIC PARTY

In recent times, practice of democracy within a party is being discussed in different quarters. The subject is very reasonable and logical. The leaders, workers and followers cannot follow and nurse the democratic ethics, if there is no practice of democracy within the party. No party can present democracy to the people, where the leaders, workers and followers are not used to practice of democracy.

Basically democracy is nothing but an aggregate of some behavioral attitude. These are:

- Mutual respect from person to person;
- Respect towards opinion of each other;
- Sacrificing personal opinion to aggregate opinion or to give up personal thinking for the greater interest;
- Not to interfere on other's freedom;
- Recognizing and accept the result of the election sincerely;
- Protecting the wealth of the country, nation and the people;
- Resisting the tendency of personal opinion on to others;
- Avoiding the tendency of giving unilateral decision;
- Avoiding misuse of power, influence, pride, etc.

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In addition to the above, giving up using muscle power and evil activities against humanity including terrorism, etc. are the essential preconditions of democracy.

The party, which practically follows the abovementioned qualities or characteristics of democracy, can be designated as a real democratic party. The party, which has only the Dais speeches or leaflet or beautifully printed and covered Manifesto, cannot be considered as a democratic party.

Considering the fact above, I am going to present some unique characteristic of Jamaat-e-Islami to my respected society of readers.

1. Election of Leadership

Actually the leadership is the main ingredient of a party. Fundamental activities like determining principle, taking decision, etc. are solved under the leadership. On the other hand, millions of followers implement the party programs. For this purpose, the followers take much pain and sometimes become victims of oppression of their opposite parties. Even they sacrifice their lives and wealth to comply the orders of their leaders for the interest of the country.

Due to wide and high responsibility of the leaders, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami accomplishes the election of the leadership with utmost care and with devoted thoughts and conscience of the members and workers. Jamaat-e-Islami leaders are elected by the secret ballots of the members. The members are at liberty and they can express their opinion without hesitation. In the process of election, there is no scope of publicity in favor of or against any body. If any member indulged in such activities, his membership is cancelled, which is a heavy organizational punishment. No member (male/female) can cast vote for himself. This system is introduced to pay respect and to give importance to others than to himself. The election of central leadership is held every after three years and it is mandatory. The Chief of the Party i.e. the Ameer of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is elected by the direct votes of the members

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(male/female) of the whole country. After the election of Ameer of the party, the election of Central Majlish-e-Shura is held. The election or constitution of the Central Majlish-e-Shura is done in such a way that it may reflect the representation of the members (male/female) as well as the representation of the districts.

The district leadership is elected every after two years. The District Ameer is elected by the members and District Majlish-e-Shura is also elected by their votes. Similarly, through the same procedure, the election of Thana Ameer and Thana Majlish-e-Shura are elected. Generally, national leaders cannot be created every year, so in case of election of national leaders, the duration of time has been made three years. It is possible to create leadership in District level in a shorter period; so it has been made two years. And in Thana or Union level leadership, it is possible to create far more quickly; so duration of election is kept one year. It is mandatory to hold election in every stage before the expiry of body. There are two inherent reasons behind this system:

Firstly, the leader cannot take chance to perform his job dictatorially after holding the post of leadership or he would hold or desires to hold the post during his lifetime - this autocratic and undemocratic mentality is strictly discouraged. This is done to stop ways of dynasty in Jammat-e-Islami.

Second reason is to develop leadership in the party gradually. Holding election within the specified period helps to create new leadership; if any one is more qualified than the existing one, the members or electorate can elect their preferred leader under the normal procedure. This system helps to properly evaluate qualified persons, create dynamism and lively environment to move the party forward. No competition of giving special attention to some person is created here and there is no necessity of flattering, adulating, swelling and glorifying any person by any one. As a result, members and workers of Jamaat can continue their party activities without hesitation and with their self-respect, personality and rights.

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2. Election Commission

The election procedure of electing the leadership in Jamaat-e-Islami is completed under an independent Election Commission. In Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, there are separate Election Commissions in the central, district and thana level. The Majlish-e-Shura of the organization constitutes the respective Election Commission comprised of three members. The authority to constitute such Election Commissions lied upon the Central, District and Thana Majlish-e-Shura. After constitution of the Election Commission, they perform their task independently. The Central Election Commission conducts the election of the Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami, Central Majlish-e-Shura, District Ameer and District Majlish-e-Shura. Moreover, the Central Election Commission holds the election of the Women's Majlish-e-Shura. The District Election Commission conducts the election of Thana Ameer, Thana Majlish-e-Shura and Thana women's Majlish-e-Shura. Similarly, Thana Election Commission conducts the process of election of the subordinate organizations. In the process of election, there is no scope of interference, pressure or influence by the Ameer or by the existing leaders. They perform their own duties. Only in the affairs of casting their own votes, the leaders do not have the privilege to know any affairs of election. The Election Commission does not need to be accountable to the Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami. However, they are accountable to the respective Majlish-e-Shura and are to submit report to it. In the organizational Constitution of Jammat, provision of such election procedure is included to strictly follow the democratic principle within the organization.

3. Decision Making Process

The Ameer of Jamaat is elected by the direct votes of the members (male/ female), who is the chief of the party and is the national leader. For this reason his position is undoubtedly very strong. As the leaders and workers respect him very much, so they love him as well. Thousand of workers are always ready

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to any sort of sacrifice at his command. In spite of such position, he never tries to establish dictatorship and dominance over them. The spirit of Jamaat is the greater the leader, the more submissive and generous he is. This spirit is reflected in taking the decisions in the party. Being such a great leader, he never takes decision unilaterally. The constitution of Jamaat does not permit him to do so. On the other hand, the pleasant characteristic of the leader prevents him from such mentality. The Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami has to take decision after discussing in the following organizational forums:

a. The Central Executive Committee

The Central Executive Committee is constituted after consulting with the Central Majlish-e-Shura. This Committee consists of 15 members. The Ameer of Jamaat takes decisions on day-to-day affairs or regular activities after discussing with the Central Executive Committee. The meeting of Central Executive Committee is held once in a month. However, in case of emergency the meeting of the Executive Committee is held occasionally. For example: the Central Executive Committee met thirteen times from October 2006 to 11th January 2007. In that vulnerable situation, the Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami took every decision, not unilaterally, but discussing with the Executive Committee to ascertain the role of the party.

b. The Central Working Committee

The Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami convenes the meeting of the Central Working Committee to take important decisions, but not any fundamental type of decision. The Committee consists of 50 members. According to the Constitution of the organization, it is mandatory to hold the meeting of the Central Working Committee once in every three months. However, the meeting can be convened at any time to take any emergency decision. For example, in the months of November and December of 2006, the meetings of the Central Working Committee were held more than thrice. Actually, there is no need to create

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pressure on Ameer to convene such meetings; rather he convenes such meetings from his own sense of responsibilities. It may be mentioned here that, the Central Working Committee also bears the responsibilities of the Parliamentary Board of the Party, which finally decides the candidature of the party in elections, considering the recommendations from the root levels.

c. The Central Majlish-e-Shura

The Central Majlish-e-Shura of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is constituted to take some fundamental decisions like determining principles of the Party, taking yearly Plan, Budget approval, implementation of programs, etc. The Central Majlish-e-Shura consists of 203 members. Members of the female Majlish-e-Shura by dint of their position, are the members of this Shura. According to the Constitution of the Jamaat-e-Islami, it is mandatory to hold the meetings of the Central Majlish-e-Shura twice a year and this practice is being implemented since the establishment of the Party. In the meeting, the members express their views on the agenda of the meeting very freely. They even take oath to express their opinion without hesitation. The opinions expressed here are not based on anybody's likings or disliking or going against somebody's views or not. The views, which are essential to bring the movement forward and essential for the welfare of the party, are expressed in the meeting. The Ameer of Jamaat, all the leaders, grassroots level of organizations, members (male/ female) abide by the decisions of the Central Majlish-e-Shura. No body can change it's decision unilaterally. If any change seems to be necessary, that can only be done through convening the meeting of the Central Majlish-e-Shura. Apart from taking important decisions, the Central Majlish-e-Shura also takes the rsponsibility of rectification of leadership. If any shortcoming is found in the Party Chief or among the leaders that was not rectified through personal intervention, then any member can attract the attention of the relevant leader to rectify his fault. If it happens, the relevant leader would explain the

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matter clearly or would accept the reason of attracting his attention and would promise before all to rectify his faults.

Similarly, separate Majlish-e-Shura is formed in all District and Thana level. These Shuras are elected by the direct votes of the members (male/female). The Majlish-e-Shura of the subordinate organizations have the responsibilities to implement the decisions of the central organization. The leaders of the subordinate organizations of Jamaat perform their responsibilities through the process of consultation among them. There is at all no scope to extend unilateral supremacy in Jamaat-e-Islami. There are Working Committees to perform day-to-day activities in the organizations of all level including Thana organization. The respective Majlish-e-Shura advices Ameer to constitute the respective Working Committees.

4. Advice

The soul of democracy is to give and take advices. The Jamaat-e-Islami has turned its organizational and party culture to practice of accepting and giving advices before taking any decision. Decisions taken through consultation gain more power during implementation than that of the decisions taken unilaterally. Because, the decisions taken through consultation are regarded by everyone as their own decisions. As a result, unprecedented coordination of sincerity and devotion occurred during the implementation of decisions. In this way, the brothers and sisters of the organization become ready to sacrifice to any extent. This is why consultation has been highly emphasized in the organizational Conduct Rule of Islam. Being an Islamic party, Jamaat always tries to follow the principles as laid down in Islam.

5. Allegiance and Discipline

Some people think Jamaat-e-Islami is a regimented party without knowing the fact. Jamaat-e-Islami is not a regimented party. The root cause of prevailing the environment of organizational discipline and unprecedented allegiance in the

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party is the practice of pure democracy in the party. The leaders of Jamaat are elected, while the members and workers are evaluated properly. Opinions of everyone receive proper value. As a result, relationship based on intimate brotherhood among them is grown up. The disciplined environment and the unique example of allegiance, which are grown up, are not regimented one; rather these are spontaneous. Moreover, these are not imposed; rather these are essence of sincerity.

6. Correction Process of Leadership

Democracy is not an one-sided issue. It is through democracy, every person enjoys his personal rights; on the other hand, he has to bear the responsibility to perform duties for others. When everybody accomplishes his duties properly, there is no need to struggle for individual rights. When there is deviation in duties; the right of someone is spoilt there; or if anyone tries to do more than his own responsibilities or does excesses, the organization's internal integration is perished too. Then what is the remedy to get rid of this situation? The only way to get rid of this situation is, there must be a modus operandi of correction within the party. When anyone performs his duty carelessly, tries to do more in the name of responsibilities or does excesses; then he should be caught hold of. To perform this, there should remain an environment of freedom of speech, embracing the juniors with broad mentality and an approach of respect and love for each other. Fortunately, all these qualities exist in the organizational environment of Jamaat-e-Islami. That is why the members and workers are enjoying the liberal democratic environment in the party. They do not have to work with the sorrows of tolerating the failure in driving away the shortcomings of their leaders. In other words, they do not need to speak against each other with an abundant agitation.

The case is nothing but the reflection of the Salat (prayer), where the followers follow the Imam (leader who leads prayer) sincerely. It is possible due to the Imam also obeys the specific guidelines in the same way.

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7. Selection Procedure of Nominee/Candidature in National Election

Usually it is observed that the persons who want to be candidates lie obstinately at the doors of the central leaders. During their visit, they present different paper cuttings of their achievements, memorable pictures with the leaders, the bio-data, etc. before them. They are seen to wait in front of the Parliamentary Board of the party after the interview. At a certain point in time, the Parliamentary Board declares the names of candidates. This is visible in the normal procedure of selecting candidates. Generally it is seen that other than declared candidate, all become dissatisfied. Later, the parties try to manage them in different ways. Sometimes, they could not be managed and they participate in the election as the rival candidate, which creates immense trouble for the party.

Unlike above, the selection procedure of candidates in Jamaat-e-Islami is completely different. None can declare himself as a candidate. This is why the person, who is going to participate in the election, is addressed as nominee, and not as a candidate (i.e. the person in favor of whom the nomination is given). To select a nominee, on behalf of the central committee, a team consists of one or more members visit the particular area. At the time of the visit, all Unit, Ward and Union Presidents and rest of the members assemble. In that assembly, all people according to their own angle of vision write down the name of the efficient person on a white paper. The visiting team carefully takes all the documents to the President of Central Election Conducting Committee. During their visit, the team also collects the opinions of the District Majlish-e-Shura. This Central Election Conducting Committee later evaluates all the opinions. Based on opinions, the names that are considered, scrutiny of whom is done with utmost importance with respect to their qualities like the standard of their characteristics, truthfulness, sincerity and the relation with the people. When a unanimous decision is taken in favor of someone, the very name is placed before the Parliamentary Board, where the Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami-e-Islami presides. Again all information so far collected

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is placed before the Parliamentary Board. Then after analyzing carefully, the name of the nominee is finalized. This decision of the nomination is accepted by all, because in the process of finalizing the nomination, the opinions of the members, workers and leaders of the organization starting from village to central level are reflected properly. There is no scope of lobbing and recommendation in the process of nomination. Everybody sincerely accepts the decision as his own and tries most for the victory of the nominee.

The Jamaat-e-Islami is thus devotedly practicing democracy within the party. And for this Jamaat has to work hard with uninterrupting motivation. To create a unity of thoughts and to show respect to democratic values, endless endeavors are carried on during months after months and years after years. These tasks are very tough but not impossible, which the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has made it possible by its devoted workers and members, who are working for the satisfaction of the Almighty Allah.

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