

## The Bangladesh Times

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## The new party

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The formation of the Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Dal under the leadership of President Ziaur Rahman comes at a significant moment of our history. A process for establishing viable democratic institutions in the country had been initiated and the proposed polls in December is expected to create a representative Parliament in the country. Economically, the rejuvenation of agriculture and the industries has led to rising GNP and exports, but there is still a considerable chasm between what we produce and what is needed to achieve self-reliance. This void has to be filled in by united struggles in all sectors of production.

The principle objective of politics ought to be the resuscitation of the processes which lead to socio-economic emancipation of the masses with the simultaneous strengthening of resistance against foreign intervention, hegemonism and internal subversion. The latter is important because we can draw out economic strategies having relevance to contemporaneous situation and reflecting the true aspirations of the people only in conditions of complete sovereignty over our resources. The ultimate success of socio-economic programmes will, however, depend on the degree of popular involvement these attract. The new political party has declared in its manifesto that it stands for unity on the basis of Bangladeshi nationalism, democracy, economic emancipation, self-reliance and progress. As it is the BJD gives a more concrete form to the alliance of the six political parties and groups which constituted the Nationalist Front. President Ziaur Rahman explaining the objectives of the new party stressed that "one has to accept the other in the greater interest of the nation." As has been with the Nationalist Front, the new political party purports to combine the prudence of age with the vigour of youth and to incorporate a broad spectrum of political viewpoints. The BJD stands also committed to the 19-point programme.

The result of the last June 3 presidential poll indicates that the people want a determined united effort to improve their lot and an atmosphere marked by stability to achieve progress. It is therefore absolutely essential that in spite of the diversity of opinion which is a fundamental requirement of democracy, the basic thread of unity persists. This is not only for building prosperity and consolidating independence at home but also for pursuing a constructive foreign policy abroad.

The President in a Press conference on Friday said that the BJD wants a multiparty system. The effectiveness of such a system obviously lies in the public debates which constitute its integral part. One of the crucial tests of the system and the democratic process will be how such debates are steered along constructive lines to produce the most prudent consensus of opinion. Another will be their effectiveness in building and sustaining political institutions responsive to the genuine needs of the people and under constant public scrutiny and accountability. The new party comes with a promise to help in achieving success in both these fields as well as in strengthening unity, stability and progress.