

Tail-up Jamaat

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expressed solidarity with those parties to drum up support for its cause.

On December 3 at the secretary general's meeting of the alliance at the BNP's Naya Paltan office, Jamaat brought up its plan to enforce a dawn-to-dusk hartal the following day. At that time the majority of the alliance instantly extended their support to Jamaat.

But the BNP took ten hours to announce that it was on Jamaat's side.

"The December 4 hartal proved that Jamaat is alone capable of holding any programme successfully at any time," said Jashim Uddin Sarker, legal affairs secretary of Jamaat.

That was the first such move taken by Jamaat in the last four years.

Jammat was making moves in its own way, Jashim said.

Jamaat activists across the country were prepared for today's eight-hour roadblock intended to show their strength, some party leaders said.

Whenever Jamaat took to the streets or held any protest, it was strongly resisted or harassed by the law enforcers, said Shaikh Shawkat Hossain Nilu, chief of the National Peoples Party (NPP).

But Jamaat in a programme held by the alliance can easily raise its demand for the release of its detained leaders, a Liberal Democratic Party leader said whishing not to be named. Jamaat has all support from the small parties and so it is using them to get BNP's backing for a hardline stance, he added.

Talking to The Daily Star, a number of leaders of the BNP-led 18-party alliance echoed this view.

Jamaat at the alliance's chairman-level meeting on December 6 also requested BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to take a hardline stance against the government, said Islamic Party Chairman Abdul Mobin who was present there.

"In response, Khaleda Zia expressed her sympathy for Jamaat and said they would go for tougher programmes like hartal and blockade if the government did not meet their demands."

Many parties in the alliance thought that the opposition should launch a protest programme now, said the NPP chief Nilu.

The BNP, however, was not yet ready for such action, he said, and it had support from the Liberal Democratic Party and the Bangladesh Jatiya Party in this case.

Egyptian military

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sparked days of violence. But it said a solution to the political crisis should not contradict "legitimacy and the rules of democracy".

The spokesman said the military's duty was to protect national interests and secure vital state institutions. "The armed forces ... realise their responsibility to preserve the higher interests of the country and to secure and protect vital targets, public institutions and the interests of innocent citizens," the statement said.

"The armed forces affirm that dialogue is the best and only way to reach consensus," it added. "The opposite of that will bring us to a dark tunnel that will result in catastrophe and that is something we will not allow."

The military's attempt to defuse the political crisis came as the spiritual leader of Morsi's party, the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, also urged Egyptians to down violence, saying that working through the ballot box was the best way to lift the country out of its turmoil.

Brotherhood "supreme guide" Mohammed Badie said on Saturday morning that the group's supporters did not initiate the violent clashes outside the presidential palace in which at least seven people died and 700 were injured.

Morsi has called for a meeting with his opponents to discuss the crisis. The opposition has rejected

talks, saying Morsi must first cancel the referendum on the draft constitution set for 15 December.

Mohamed ElBaradei, the opposition National Salvation Front's chief coordinator and a Nobel laureate, called on opposition groups to shun dialogue with Morsi. We want "a dialogue not based on an arm-twisting policy and imposing fait accompli", he said on Twitter. George Ishak, another opposition leader, said: "Whoever has killed his own people has lost legitimacy."

Net gets

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through Benapole of Bangladesh and onto two landing stations in Mumbai and Chennai.

India has multiple international submarine cables and a number of submarine cable landing stations. It also has multiple international terrestrial cables with neighbouring and strategically important countries (China, Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan), according to a statement of NovoCom.

It also said the launching of IIG-players and 3G services are expected to exponentially increase internet connectivity of government branches, corporate houses, SMEs, academicians, institutions/schools, and individuals.

NovoCom is a sister concern of NovoTel Ltd, an international gateway operator.

Sorry, US

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Barack Obama.

In 2002 the singer smashed a model US tank at a protest over the American military presence in South Korea and the death of two South Korean teenagers who were struck by a US military vehicle.

Two years later he joined a performance of a song where he used controversial expletive-laden lyrics calling for the killing of "Yankees who have been torturing Iraqi captives".

"Kill their daughters, mothers, daughters-in-law, and fathers. Kill them all slowly and painfully," he rapped.

Psy performed the lyrics at a concert after a South Korean evangelist was beheaded by Islamist militants in Iraq during the US-led conflict, after Seoul rejected their demand to halt a troop deployment to the country.

"I will forever be sorry for any pain I have caused by those words," the 34-year-old singer said in a statement.

He said the performance and lyrics were part of a "deeply emotional reaction" to the war in Iraq and the death of the two schoolgirls

that was "part of the overall anti-war sentiment shared by others around the world".

"While I'm grateful for the freedom to express one's self, I've learned there are limits to what language is appropriate and I'm deeply sorry for how these lyrics could be interpreted."

"I have been honoured to perform in front of American soldiers in recent months -- including an appearance on the Jay Leno show specifically for them -- and I hope they and all Americans can accept my apology."

News reports of the performances surfaced in the United States days before the pop sensation's planned performance at an annual "Christmas in Washington" concert on Sunday, which the Obama family is scheduled to attend.

Psy's "Gangnam Style" has become the most-watched video of all time on YouTube in just five months, garnering almost 906 million views.

The video has inspired thousands of online imitations of Psy's famous horse-ride dance, and flash mobs of tens of thousands in Paris, Rome and Milan.

Padma funding

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in the ACC's draft enquiry report on corruption allegations.

In the statement, Goldstein said, "The World Bank provided extensive information to the ACC to support such an investigation. Following its first visit to Bangladesh, the External Panel of independent anti-corruption experts encouraged the ACC to launch a full and fair investigation based on available evidence and in full accordance with Bangladesh law."

"During its second visit to Bangladesh last week, the panel noted several unresolved issues and further encouraged the ACC to follow available evidence in determining the scope of its investigation. The panel will issue a statement when the ACC completes its review and takes a final decision on the scope of the investigation," she said.

Goldstein later talked to reporters coming out of a programme at the LGED auditorium in the capital.

Replying to a query on the "unresolved issues" mentioned in the statement, she said, "I think the issue that is being discussed is the applicability of certain Bangladeshi laws and how this would influence the scope of the investigation, and that is really the issue that I think the ACC is dealing with and of course we leave it to them entirely."

"It is their responsibility to work in accordance with the laws of Bangladesh and to determine what is the appropriate scope of the investigation into corruption evidence under Padma bridge."

In his instant reaction, Muhith told reporters in Sylhet that the WB's latest statement is "totally unjust" as discussions are still on with the global lender over the project's funding.

"I just don't like it," he said after laying the foundation stone of a primary school building in Sylhet.

"A team of WB experts visited Dhaka for the second time. It held meetings with the ACC and me too. They obviously expect something from the discussions and we also expect something good," said the finance minister.

But it was not a right thing on the part of the WB Dhaka office to issue such a statement at this moment, said Muhith.

The ACC chairman said, "We are reviewing the draft enquiry report on the basis of discussions with the external panel. I don't understand why the World Bank issued the statement at this stage."

Replying to another question, Rahman said, "We have heard their views. We will consider those while reviewing the draft report."

ACC sources said though the WB provided sufficient evidence against Abul Hossain, the ACC did not

include his name in its draft report leading to a stalemate in talks between the commission and the external panel.

ACC panel lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that the commission can implicate Syed Abul Hossain in the first information report, if it has got any specific allegations against him.

Khurshid said he didn't know whether there is any corruption allegation against Abul, as he didn't see the inquiry report.

The WB on November 13 sent a third report to the ACC on corruption evidence containing detailed evidence of corruption against certain public officials as well as others.

The WB prepared the third report based on information received from the Canadian government and other sources, said a high official asking not to be named.

The third report mentioned the names of those against whom corruption allegations had been raised in an earlier report, but the latest one contained more evidence, the official said.

Wishing anonymity, a finance ministry official said the WB and the project's co-financiers were ready to start the bridge project this month, subject to the WB panel's positive signal about the ACC enquiry.

The WB panel's visit was rescheduled early, instead of late this month, as the project's co-financiers were eager to start the project sooner.

But the whole thing got stuck following a stalemate in talks between the ACC and the WB panel over the ACC enquiry into the corruption allegations in the project, said the official.

On December 2, Muhith told reporters that the project's implementation will begin soon after the investigation gets started.

He said the WB panel wanted to see action, which means launching of an investigation, filing of case and submission of chargesheet.

The co-financiers held a meeting in Manila from November 28 to 30 to discuss the revised implementation arrangement for the bridge project, said sources.

According to the revised arrangement, the donor having the biggest share in the financing of a specific package would lead that component. A committee headed by the lead donor of that component will oversee the entire implementation process that includes inviting tender, selection of bidders and evaluation of the bids. The government will finally approve it.

The co-financiers would have finalised the revised implementation arrangement this month on discussion with the government, had the external panel given a positive signal about the ACC

enquiry, said the sources.

The WB cancelled its \$1.2 billion funding on June 29, saying it had proof of a "corruption conspiracy" involving Bangladeshi officials, executives of a Canadian firm and some individuals.

The global lender on September 21 decided to revive the loan after the Bangladesh government agreed to the WB's terms and conditions, including proper probe into the corruption allegations in the project.

Transport strike

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police on the highways.

The strike will be enforced on Dhaka to Gazipur, Mymensingh, Netrakona, Kishoreganj and Tangail routes, Osman Ali Khan, general secretary of the workers' federation, told The Daily Star.

The demands include taking steps to stop extortion and harassment by police, freeing the office of district transport workers' union and owners' association (Kaliakoir branch) from occupants and lowering prices of all types of fuel including CNG.

To drum up support for the strike, the transport workers yesterday brought out protest processions on Dhaka-Tangail and Dhaka-Mymensingh highways, reports UNB.

Later, the federation leaders at a meeting held on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway threatened that the 48-hour strike would be observed in all routes in Dhaka division if the demands were not met before December 10.

2 Bangladeshi

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She told them she had fled to Ahmedabad from Rajkot.

"She told us she was from Bangladesh and had come with her family to India in search of work," said a Childline official.

While she was working in Kolkata, a woman approached her parents and offered her a job in Gujarat with double the pay she was getting then. Her parents allowed her to go to Gujarat with some other girls. In Rajkot she was thrown into the sex trade, the official said.

Nahla somehow managed to flee the place she worked in and boarded the first train she found. She got down at Kalupur where she was found. She told officials about another Bangladeshi girl - Shahida - working with her at Rajkot.

The NGO officials contacted city crime branch who informed Rajkot police about the incident. A team of Rajkot crime branch raided the spot and rescued Shahida, 17, mother of a baby.

After legal process', the two girls have been cleared to be returned to Bangladesh next week.

Climate taken seriously

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Bangladesh are vulnerable to inundation due to increased cyclonic surges, and this number will increase to 18.5 million by 2050 under moderate climate change scenarios, said a World Bank release.

Over the last decades, the Bangladesh government has invested more than \$10 billion to make the country less vulnerable to natural disasters. Measures as strengthening river embankments, building emergency cyclone shelters, and developing world class community based early warning system have significantly reduced the loss of life and livelihoods and property damages caused by extreme weather events.

The statement said the high-level event was organised to showcase the proactive responses of extremely vulnerable nations toward climate resilience as the nations are beginning to experience the early impacts of global climate change.

It said the experiences and lessons shared by the top government officials at the event echoed the findings of the recent released World Bank Report "Turn Down The Heat: Why a 4°C

Warmer World Must be Avoided". It summarises a range of climate consequences on development against a global path of emissions reductions that could lead to 4 degrees Celsius increasing in warming.

"Bangladesh is already a global hotspot for tropical cyclones and other climatic events and is highly vulnerable to increased intensity of storms and droughts that will result from climate change," said Environment and Forests Minister Hasan Mahmud.

He said that two-thirds of the country was less than five metre above sea-level and vulnerable to coastal inundation and salinity intrusion, which "we are already experiencing".

To supplement its national programs, Bangladesh has successfully aligned its development partners to address the climate change challenge and established an innovative financing mechanism -- the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF).

So far, the BCCRF has channelled \$170 million in grant funds from seven development partners,

namely Australia, Denmark, the EU, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the USA to strengthen the resilience to climate change.

The government of Bangladesh is in the driver's seat and the authority of choosing projects to fund and implementing them. On an interim basis, the WB is playing the role of trustee conducting fiduciary transparency and accountability with due diligence of the BCCRF, the release added.

The government of Bangladesh has also created a separate "Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund" and allocated \$350 million from its own resources for the last four years since 2009.

Bangladesh has been implementing 106 projects to address climate change including better adaptation and mitigation.

Meanwhile, the Maldives has a Strategic Plan of Action (2009-2013) also known as the National Framework for Development and National Adaptation Programme of Action (2006) that provides a solid policy foundation to environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation and low carbon development.

Bahrain seeks talks with opposition

AFP, Manama

Bahraini Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa on Friday called on for dialogue with the mainly Shiite Muslim opposition in the Sunni-dominated country, urging them to condemn violence.

"We had our own experience of the so-called Arab Spring last year. It divided the nation, and many wounds are still to be healed," the prince told delegates at the annual Manama Dialogue organised by the International Institute of Strategic Studies.

Bahrain, home to the US Fifth Fleet and strategically situated across the Gulf from Shiite Iran, has experienced unrest since February 2011, when Arab Spring-style protests led by the Shiite majority erupted.

Hundreds of people were arrested when security forces aided by troops from neighbouring Saudi Arabia crushed the uprising within a month.

Housewife

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Tahura Bibi, aged about 40. Pallabi police recovered her body from her residence at block E of Pallabi around 9:30pm.

Returning home from outside, her adopted daughter found Tahura's throat slit and body lying on the floor. Her husband is an expatriate in Saudi Arabia, said Abdul Latif Sheikh, officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station.

Tahura was home alone when she was murdered. Police could not confirm the motive of the murder immediately.

In the other incident, 24-year-old Noman, a field worker of a microfinance organisation, was talking to an 11-year-old girl at block A of Dhaka Udyan housing around 8:30pm, said Mohammadpur police.

Suspecting him to be a child-lifter, locals beat him up to death.

Oops

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In the final analysis, the importance of Mominul's 25 and lower-order batsman Shohag Gazi's 19 may be overlooked, but the vital contributions were in keeping with the team performances the Tigers had put in during the series, with the possible exception of the fourth match.

But drama was the name of the game yesterday, as Roach repeated his opening heroics at the death, taking the wickets of Shohag and Abdur Razzak off successive deliveries in the 43rd over to leave the Tigers eight down with three runs to go. But the night was destined to be Bangladesh's, as they celebrated the victory in style.

Earlier, it was a repeat of their bowling consistency but this time without their lionhearted paceman Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, who missed the match due to a thigh strain. But Shafiqul Islam, playing his first match of the series did Mashrafe's job by accounting for Chris Gayle as the West Indies stumbled to 17 for three in the eighth over. But even after the dismissals of key players Gayle and Marlon Samuels, the West Indians showed great fight through a 133-run fourth-wicket partnership between big-hitting Kieron Pollard (85) and Darren Bravo (51).

That the West Indies could not score more than 217 before losing all their wickets was down to the expected brilliance of the Bangladesh spinners, who continued at the same level of performance that they have shown through the series. Mominul was a surprise package as he got the key wicket of Pollard, after which it was always going to be a struggle for West Indies.

This is a victory to cherish and celebrate, as it is only their second ODI series win over a full-strength Test side after their 4-0 trouncing of New Zealand in 2010 right here in Dhaka.

However, the drama was not only at the end. As the Tigers slumped to nine for 2, memories of the previous night's debacle must have been fresh. And tensions heightened when they were reduced to 30 for 3. But the Tigers called upon the same reserves of resilience that got them a 2-0 series lead in Khulna as Mahmudullah Riyad, promoted to join his captain Mushfiqur Rahim, did exactly what Bangladesh then required to script the memorable series win against the Caribbeans.

In contrast to the previous night, the duo took the attack to the West Indians during their 91-run fourth-wicket partnership, which changed the tide in the Tigers' favour and raised unconquerable hope among the thousands in the stands and beyond. Even as mystery spinner Sunil Narine came back to dismiss Mahmudullah for a sparkling 45-ball 48 before also accounting for skipper Mushfiqur, the Tigers rode

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