



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

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Cost of living rose 11pc last year compared to that in 2012

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WikiLeaks didn't know or approve of party meeting with the Syria president

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Jamaat vexed at BNP role

Distances itself from blockade over ally's Mollah reaction

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Jamaat-e-Islami is gradually distancing itself from its main ally BNP, as the Islamist party is disappointed with the BNP's handling of the ongoing movement and its stance on the execution of Abdul Quader Mollah.

The Jamaat believes it has already "paid dearly" by losing many of its leaders and activists in the violent movement against the government. In most cases, BNP leaders and activists kept themselves from the street agitations.

To the Jamaat, the BNP just wanted to have the pie prepared through Jamaat sacrifice. In addition, the more Jamaat takes to the streets, the more it is perceived as a terrorist organisation. But it could have come out of this stigma had the BNP joined it on the ground.

At the same time, the Jamaat was expecting that BNP chief Khaleda Zia would condemn, at least tactically, the hanging on December 12 of Jamaat assistant secretary general Quader Mollah for war crimes. But she did not do so, which has frustrated Jamaat.

The Daily Star has learnt these from a number of leaders of the BNP, Jamaat and a component of the 18-party opposition alliance.

The rift between the two allies became clearer after the BNP failed to bring out on the streets any of its leaders to enforce the December 29 "March for Democracy" programme that was later extended by one day.

According to the sources, Khaleda herself phoned the 20 Dhaka city



Jubo Dal leader shot dead

Nonstop blockade begins

STAR REPORT

An activist of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, youth wing of the BNP, was shot dead and several others were wounded in a clash between blockaders and BGB personnel in Chandpur yesterday, the first day of the BNP-led opposition's indefinite blockade across the country.

Blockaders hurled petrol bombs at a Rajbari-bound train at Pangsha station in Rajbari last night, causing fire to one of its compartments.

Fire-fighters brought the flames under control after more than half an hour around 11:30pm, said fire service officials.

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'Love' for land knows no bounds

Eight AL lawmakers, leaders own land equivalent to one-tenth of Dhaka

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Just eight ruling party lawmakers and leaders roughly own land equivalent to a tenth of the capital, excluding the cantonments.

A random scan of the wealth statements the eight ruling party lawmakers and leaders recently submitted to the Election Commission reveals their lust for land and how aggressively they got hold of it as much as they could during the last five years.

Just five years ago, as per their 2008 wealth statements, the eight owned

only 71.417 acres of land.

They now own 3,508 acres of land. The pieces of land are worth a couple of thousands crore taka. Many say that they actually have even more land than they have disclosed.

For the sake of understanding how much land is being talked about here: Dhaka city spreads over 31,630 acres of land. The eight state-owned export processing zones and the private Korean EPZ combined have only around 5,000 acres.

Former state minister for water resources Mahbubur Rahman, Forest

and Environment Minister Hasan Mahmud, former state minister for housing and public works Abdul Mannan Khan, lawmaker from Dhaka [Mirpur] Aslamul Haque Aslam, AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif, former state minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak, lawmaker Nazrul Islam Babu and AL Organising Secretary Bir Bahadur are the ones who bought vast tracts of land in the last five years.

But some ruling party high-ups did not just go for land, considered a secure investment with high future returns.

Instead, they went for large fish farms, which is a way to avoid tax since earnings from fisheries are tax free.

Seven lawmakers have shown in total Tk 34 crore annual earnings from fisheries while two have shown investments worth Tk 27 crore in fish farming.

AL lawmakers Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, Nur-e-Alam Chowdhury, Elias Uddin Mollah, Mannan Khan and Hanif, and three AL nominated candidates, ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury (Chittagong-6), Didarul Alam (Chittagong-4), and Talukder Abdul

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Motorbike riders carry passengers at Bijoy Sarani intersection in the capital yesterday ignoring or oblivious to the government ban on motorcyclists carrying pillion.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

ONLY ONE TO RIDE A MOTORBIKE

Sudden ban kicks up an uproar

HELEMUL ALAM and RAFIUL ISLAM

The government out of the blue has slapped an indefinite ban on pillion passengers on motorbikes upsetting law-abiding motorcyclists.

"I always take my wife to her office at Motijheel, around 10km from my home at Taltala," said Nazmul Ahsan. With no direct buses to take her to work, his wife now has to change vehicles, including rickshaws, several times to get to work spending a lot

more time and money on the commute.

The ban put Aminul Islam in trouble as the resident of Mirpur uses his bike to take his daughter to school 1.5km away. "I am worried but I welcome the BRTA decision. I want relaxation of the ban in cases of carrying children to their schools," he added.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) imposed the ban on Saturday following several incidents in which motorbikes with pillion passengers were involved



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